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HISTORY

OF THE

EVANGÉLICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

IN GERMANTOWN, OHIO,

AND

BIOGRAPHIES

OF ITS

PASTORS AND FOUNDERS,

BY THE REV. J. P. HENTZ, A. M.

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DAYTON, O.:

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# PREFACE.

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This little volume has been prepared for the special use and benefit of the members of the congregation whose history it records. To preserve and perpetuate among them and their descendants and successors the knowledge of the first planting and early history of their congregation, has been the main aim and end of the writer.

But he has also had another object in view. He has long cherished the hope that the time might speedily come when some one, competent for the task, would undertake the work of writing the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in this western world. Fully aware that this can not be done unless the material for the history be first collected, and be furnished ready to the hand of the historian, he has written this account as a small contribution toward a general history.

The Lutheran Church in the United States has attained to dimensions, is exerting an influence, and gives promise of a future, that seem to the writer to demand that her history be speedily written, both for the information of her own children, and the Christian public at large. In point of numbers she holds the fourth place, probably the third, among the Protestant churches of our land, embracing



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within her fold nearly one million of communicants. Her growth is more rapid than that of any other denomination. Her accessions, which she receives mainly by immigration from European countries, are truly colossal and are without a precedent or parallel in the history of any other church. It is estimated that in the year 1881, two hundred thousand souls, holding her faith, landed on the shores of our country ; and the year 1882, it is supposed, will bring over of the same people three hundred thousand more. From these figures it is easy to foresee that, ere many more years shall have passed by, the Lutheran Church will be the largest Protestant body in this country, as she now is in the world ; and that as such she is destined to become an important factor in the ecclesiastical and civil affairs of our country and nation.

In view of these facts it is unquestionably a matter of the utmost importance, and of most urgent necessity, that steps be taken, and means and measures be devised, for the recording and preserving of her past and present history. The work of gathering the material for it ought to be entered on at once. Facts and data can be obtained yet, which will not much longer be available. They are stored away in the memory of the aged people of the church, in congregational records, and in other equally perishable receptacles. With the decease of the former and the decay and the destruction of the latter, these sources of information will be closed up, and much that may be of great value will be lost beyond



recovery. A great deal, indeed, of most precious material has already perished in consequence of not earlier steps having been taken for its preservation.

If every Lutheran pastor in the land were to take this matter in hand, collect all material to be found in his charge, and write out the history of his parish—which he would find to be neither a painful nor a very laborious task—and furnish the same to some person or party, previously appointed as custodian, within a few years at the longest all needed material would be gathered in, and a history could be written full, complete, and satisfactory, such as would prove an honor and a blessing, not only to Lutherans but to all Christian people in our land. Synods should take steps looking toward the accomplishment of this end.

In the preparation of this account the writer has labored under some disadvantages. But few written or printed documents have been at his disposal for information. For the most of his material he has had to depend on the recollections of the aged members of his congregation as they were drawn out piecemeal in mutual conversation around their family firesides. This is a method slow in progress, and often unsatisfactory in result. On his own memory the writer could not draw for much, his pastorate among these people extending over too short a space of time, the period of nine years. With his predecessors in office, whose biographies he has attempted to give, he had no personal acquaintance. Much of the



material embodied in this account he has had to glean from the inscriptions on tombstones, from old and faded baptismal certificates, from obituary notices culled from newspapers, from records of family Bibles, and the like sources—here a little, and there a little, an item one day and another the next. That under such circumstances the work produced be but fragmentary and imperfect, is to be expected.

Accompanied by the earnest hope that it may accomplish the object in view for which its preparation was undertaken, this little volume is hereby given to the public by its writer.

J. P. H.

Germantown, Ohio, August, 1882.





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HISTORY  
OF THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION  
OF  
Germantown, Ohio.

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*Germantown*

Is a pleasant and attractive village, beautifully situated on Twin Creek, a branch of the Miami River, in the south-western part of Montgomery County, Ohio, and has a population of about eighteen hundred. The first settlement in its vicinity was effected about the year 1798, by a people who came here from the State of Kentucky. But they were squatters, and did but little toward the improvement of the country. In the year 1804 arrived here the first immigrants from Pennsylvania—about a dozen families—all from the counties of Berks and Center. These bought out the Kentuckians, and in a few years' time the Pennsylvanians alone were left as the owners and occupants of the soil. After this emigration set in at such a rapid rate that by the year 1810 the country was already thickly settled, and



land sold at from twenty-five to fifty dollars per acre. There were a few arrivals from Maryland and Virginia, but the larger portion of the incoming population were from the eastern counties of Pennsylvania. In the year 1805 one of their number erected a mill on Twin Creek. Near this mill, soon after it had been built, a few dwelling-houses, a store, and some shops were erected. To these, as time advanced, others were added, and thus originated and grew up the town. Its site, however, was not regularly laid out for a town until in the year 1814. In the latter year Philip Gunckel, the proprietor of the mill and of the tract of land adjoining it, had a survey made, streets set apart, and building-lots apportioned. From this time the place began to grow rapidly in population, and has continued doing so up to this time. It received the name of Germantown from the fact that the people in and around it spoke the German as their vernacular tongue.

### *Relation Between the Lutheran and Reformed Congregations.*

The people who settled here from 1804 to 1810 were, with few exceptions, either Lutherans or German Reformed, the Lutherans having the preponderance of numbers. A friendly and fraternal feeling existed between them. It was then the almost universal custom of these two denominations, wherever they lived in the same community, to build



union churches, and to worship in the same sanctuary. And this they often did when they possessed sufficient wealth and numbers to erect separate churches and maintain themselves as separate congregations. Influenced by this custom the Lutherans and Reformeds of Germantown early formed a union, held property in common, and worshiped side by side in the same church for many years. As early as the year 1805 they were numerous enough to organize themselves into congregations, build a church, and call and support pastors. But this they did not do at that time. Most likely they were too much occupied in making homes for themselves, to give church and school much thought. Or perhaps they were unable to secure teachers and pastors, as they were then but few in number. Previous to the year 1809 there was no regularly organized congregation in Germantown, nor did any regularly called minister labor here. There was occasional preaching performed by traveling or visiting ministers, and held in private houses. Pastoral work, such as the baptizing of the children and the burying of the dead, was also performed, but only by the same class of men.

In the year 1809 the two denominations, for the first time, decided to purchase ground for a graveyard and church-lot and erect on it a house of worship, to be the joint property of both denominations. To this end they framed articles of agreement, and bound themselves mutually by them. These articles





they call "Kirchenordnung," or "Constitution of the United Congregations of German Township, Montgomery County, Ohio." It is a document deserving of preservation, and therefore there is here subjoined a translation of it into the English language.

*Constitution of the United Congregations of German Township.*

In the name of the Author of our being, whom we pray to guide us so that that which we are about to do may be done in harmony and peace and for the furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen.

We, the undersigned, members of the Evangelical Lutheran and of the Evangelical Reformed congregations of the township of German, the county of Montgomery, and the State of Ohio, together with others of the same faith residing in adjoining townships and counties who accept the articles of this constitution, hereby enter into an association for the purpose of erecting a common house of worship on a tract of land containing one acre of ground, situated in the aforesaid township and county, and having been purchased of Philip Gunckel; and we hereby establish the following articles of agreement, to-wit:

1. Both congregations—viz.: the Evangelical Lutheran and the Evangelical Reformed—agree to contribute toward the erection of a house of worship,



on the above-named one acre of ground, in the proportion of the valuation of the property of each individual member of either congregation, and to pay their contributions to the Building Committee, who have been chosen by a majority of the members of each congregation, viz. : Philip Gunckel, William Emerick, Leonard Stump, and Jacob Weber, and to continue paying at the same rate until the building is complete and paid for.

2. Trustworthy men have been appointed as trustees of the said property, viz. : Casper Støever, Lutheran, and Peter Recher, Reformed, to whom the said one acre of ground has been deeded, with this provision, viz. : In case either of them be removed by death or otherwise, or in case they prove themselves unworthy of their trust by any dishonest or immoral act, the congregation which has lost its trustee shall, by a majority of the votes of its members, elect another person in his place, who shall possess and exercise the same power as his predecessor.

3. After the house of worship is finished the expenses of its repairs and improvements shall be equally apportioned between, and be equally borne by, each congregation ; but in case one congregation becomes much stronger than the other, the stronger shall not employ compulsory measures against the weaker in the discharge of this requirement.

4. An altar or table shall be provided, and shall be so constructed that the communion and baptismal



vessels can be kept in it under lock, the key to which shall be put in the keeping of one of the deacons, and shall by him be delivered up to the pastor of each congregation whenever said vessels are required for the use to which they are designed.

5. All articles needed for the performance of divine worship, and the administration of the sacraments, shall be purchased by equal contributions from both congregations, and, after purchase, shall be the equal property of both.

6. The said house of worship is never to be used except to preach the divine word in it, or to hold in it meetings which have for their object the extension of the gospel.

7. The said house of worship shall be locked up, and the key shall be delivered for safe keeping to a person appointed for that purpose by the officers of the congregations, and shall, on demand, be always at the service of each congregation.

8. No man shall have permission to preach or perform any other ministerial act in said house of worship unless he be a member of either the Reformed or Lutheran synod, or come recommended by the same, except in case of funerals. In that case the relatives of the deceased person may make choice of any minister of good character, who shall be permitted to officiate on the occasion.

9. Both congregations, as soon as they have secured regular pastors, shall be entitled to the same portion of time in said house of worship. One shall



hold its service on one Sunday and the other on the Sunday following.

10. The union between both congregations shall be one of equal rights; and unless it be by the consent of the majority of the members of both congregations no strange minister shall be allowed to officiate in said church, with this exception: When one of the congregations invites a minister with the view of calling him as its pastor, in that case the other congregation shall not interfere.

11. All persons, without distinction of religious creed, residing in this section of country, are permitted to bury their dead in the grave-yard to which a portion of the above-named one acre of ground has been devoted, provided they previously obtain the consent of one of the trustees from both congregations. Suicides and like criminals shall not be buried in this grave-yard.

12. The said grave-yard shall be kept in good order by both congregations, and all expenses incurred in doing so shall be equally borne by both.

13. Both congregations obligate themselves to pay their collections to the Building Committee which has been chosen to attend to repairs and improvements. Said Building Committee shall render an account of its doings whenever called upon to do so by the officers of the congregation.

14. The above articles of agreement having been carefully considered and approved, we hereby pledge





ourselves to their faithful observance. In testimony whereof we attach hereunto our names.

Done this the 30th day of July, A. D. 1809.

Casper Støever, Sen., Peter Recher, Leonard Stump, William Emerick, Michael Emerich, George Boyer, Frederick Støever, Christopher Emerick, John Emerick, Martyn Shuey, Casper Støever, Jr., Philip Gunckel, Conrad Eisele, Jacob Baur, Jacob Schwank, John Støever, George Gener, Jonathan Lindamuth, William Emerick, Jr., John Gunckel, Henry Holler, Michael Gunckel.

In reference to the above articles of agreement, it remains to be added that they were carefully observed as long as the congregations worshiped in the same place. The church was built in the manner agreed upon. It was a log structure, and cost the sum of five hundred dollars. It stood a few yards to the south-west of the present Lutheran church, and was completed in the year 1810. In the conduct of the public worship and in the keeping up of the repairs all was done as the above agreement specifies.

The one acre of ground was deeded by Philip Gunckel to Casper Støever, Sen., and Peter Recher, trustees, to be held by them and their successors in office in trust for the Lutheran and Reformed congregations. Nothing is said in the deed as to the use to be made of the ground. It is a deed in fee simple, acknowledges the receipt of full value agreed



upon, and hence the piece of land may be sold or be used for any purpose whatever. This statement is here made because it has been said that the said one acre of ground was donated by Philip Gunckel for a special purpose, and if ever perverted from that purpose would revert back to the Gunckel heirs. A transcript of said deed can be found in the recorder's office in Dayton, year 1809, Book B, pages 268 and 269.

During the first few years after the church was built the congregations were supplied with word and sacrament by various men, who were mere supplies and not regular pastors. In the year 1815 the Lutherans called to their pastorate the Rev. John Casper Dill; and the Reformeds, about the same time, called the Rev. Thomas Winters. From that time to the present both congregations have been regularly served by pastors of their own creed and choice. Although worshiping in the same church and holding property in common they lived together in peace. No trouble ever rose up between them to disturb their harmony. This was owing to several causes—chiefly to their carefully drawn-up constitution. Both people and pastors were then too busy to give very close attention to distinctive denominational doctrines. They had no time for doctrinal controversy, and hence there were no mistrusts and alienations arising from this source. That bone of contention, proselyting from one another, had not yet come into practice. Of that the fathers of these



two churches knew nothing until the Methodistic sects made their appearance among them. The children generally connected with the church of their parents. In case both parents did not belong to one and the same church, the sons usually attached themselves to the church of the father, and the daughters to the church of the mother. This rule, if it had no other good in it, prevented, at least, a good deal of strife and bad feeling. This union between the two congregations continued uninterruptedly for the space of about twenty years. On one Lord's-day the Lutherans held service and on the next the Reformeds; but the audiences were always the same, the Lutherans attending the Reformed services and the Reformeds the Lutheran.

### *Disposition of Joint Property.*

In the course of time, as the population increased and with that the membership of the churches, the house of worship erected in 1810 became too small. It was found necessary either to enlarge it or else to build a new one in its place. To meet the demand for increased room Judge Philip Gunckel, the proprietor of the town and a member of the Reformed congregation, undertook, in the year 1818, to erect, at his own expense, a large and commodious brick structure, at the west end of Market Street, of which he sold one half to the Reformed congregation and the other half to the Lutheran congregation, to be



used and occupied by them as a church. This building, however, was not completed until the year 1828. In this year the two congregations abandoned the old log structure and moved into the new house. It stood on nearly the same site occupied by the present Reformed church. Here the congregations worshiped under the same roof for two years longer. But at the end of this time, in the year 1830, owing to some difficulty between Philip Gunckel and the Lutheran congregation, the latter abandoned this church and went back to their old place of worship, and soon thereafter erected a new church. By this act the two congregations were finally and forever separated so far as worship was concerned; but they still held in common the one acre of ground purchased of Philip Gunckel for grave-yard and church purposes. And this joint ownership continued up to the year 1879. In this year the Lutherans proposed to the Reformed to buy them out. They desired to have sole control of the property for obvious reasons. For more than twenty-five years the old grave-yard had been abandoned as a place of sepulture, a public cemetery having been laid out outside of the town. The property wore a neglected appearance. The fences were decaying and out of shape, the grave-stones were leaning over and falling down, and the graves were overgrown with weeds and briars. The Lutheran congregation were the only party interested in the place. It adjoined their





church-lot, and they had to pass over it to reach their own place of worship. Its dilapidated and neglected appearance made their church-property look bad. Negotiations were entered on, and, after giving the matter a thorough investigation, an understanding was arrived at and the Reformeds transferred their property-rights to the Lutherans.

The negotiations and investigation resulting in the disposition of the one acre of ground, as just mentioned, revealed facts and led to conclusions which are thought of sufficient importance to embody them in this record.

The Lutheran congregation maintained that they had a just claim to one half of the church property of the Reformed congregation, having purchased the same of Philip Gunckel and paid him for it. They owned that they had no deed or other writing by which to prove their claim legally valid — Mr. Gunckel, in consequence of a dispute about the terms of payment, having refused to make them a deed, notwithstanding their having paid him the sum agreed upon — but that their claim nevertheless was right and should be acknowledged. They said to the Reformeds, "If you will give us a quit-claim for your part of the grave-yard we will give you a quit-claim for our part of your church property." To this the Reformeds replied that they owed the Lutherans nothing; that the purchase and payment of one half of their church property was a transaction



in which they were not concerned; that that was a matter resting between Philip Gunckel and the Lutheran congregation, and that they insisted on being paid the full value of their share in the grave-yard. Inquiry being made, the following information was obtained:

Under date of February 16, 1830, Philip Gunckel conveyed by deed one half of the church property at the west end of Market Street to the German Reformed congregation. In that deed there is the following provision: "Subject also to the following restrictions and reservations, to-wit: To suffer, allow, and permit the Lutheran congregation of Germantown aforesaid, who are the owners of the undivided one half of the land above described, to use the same as a place of public worship, according to the true intent and meaning of certain articles of association entered into and ratified and concluded by and between the said German Reformed Church and the said Lutheran Church, at Germantown, on the 30th day of October, 1818, and recorded in the church-book of each of said churches."

From this extract it appears that their own deed requires the Reformed congregation to "suffer, allow, and permit the Lutheran congregation to use the Reformed church as a place of worship." That provision remains to-day unaltered, and always will remain so. It was inserted because Judge Philip Gunckel had sold the other half of the same prop-



erty to the Lutheran congregation. The latter, however, never received a deed for their one half. The deed was written, and properly signed and attested, but was never delivered, the reason of which was this: The Lutherans were to pay six hundred dollars, but found that they were unable to collect that much. They raised five hundred and twenty-five dollars. They stated their case to Mr. Gunckel, and he agreed to throw off seventy-five dollars, and give the deed on the payment of five hundred and twenty-five dollars. This sum was paid over to him. At this point he pretended to take offense at something the Lutherans had said or done, refused to abide by his last agreement, and fell back upon the first, and demanded the payment of six hundred dollars in full. Both parties now grew angry, and charged one another with unfair dealing, dropped the matter, and left it in this unfinished and unsatisfactory condition. As the Lutherans did not pay the lacking seventy-five dollars, Mr. Gunckel gave them no deed, and retained the five hundred and twenty-five dollars paid him—a transaction the like of which never seems to have troubled his easy conscience.

In his last will and testament Mr. Gunckel inserts the following article: "I desire that my executor dispose of my interest (being the undivided one half) in St. Johns (German Reformed) Church of Germantown, Ohio. One half of said church be-



longs to the German Reformed congregation. I made a conditional sale of my half to the Lutheran congregation (the agreement of said sale being in the hands of Charles O. Wolpers), made a deed for the same, and placed it in the hands of John McClure, Esq., who I directed should not give up or deliver said deed until the payment mentioned in said agreement were first fully complied with, which was not done. Said deed is null and void, as I made no delivery of the same."

Several facts now become clear: First. The Lutheran congregation lost the five hundred and twenty-five dollars which they paid to Philip Gunckel as a part of the purchase money of the one half of the church at the west end of Market Street, known as the Reformed church. Second. The Lutheran congregation never held a deed for the one half of said property, and are consequently cut off from all ownership in the same. Third. The Reformed congregation did not receive any of the money (five hundred and twenty-five dollars) paid by the Lutheran congregation to Philip Gunckel, and hence are under no pecuniary obligation to the said Lutheran congregation. Fourth. The Reformed congregation does not yet own the part once sold by Philip Gunckel to the Lutheran congregation. Said one half is at present the property of the Gunckel heirs. Fifth. The Reformed congregation, by their own deed, are required to permit the Lutheran congregation to worship in their (the Reformed) church.





Now it is true that the present house of worship occupied by the Reformed congregation is not the same which is referred to in Mr. Gunckel's will—the old house having been taken down and a new one erected in its stead—but it is also true that this new house stands in part on the lot the one half of which was once sold to the Lutheran congregation, and at this time belongs to the Gunckel heirs. What change the rebuilding of said church, or the article of Mr. Gunckel's will above cited, make in that provision of the Reformed congregation's deed, requiring them to “suffer, allow, and permit the Lutheran congregation to use the Reformed church as a place of worship,” the writer is not prepared to say. That probably would; even for an expert jurist, be a difficult question to decide. Thus, then, the case stood in the year 1879 when thorough inquiry was made into it. Fortunately an agreement was arrived at in the spring of this year. The Lutheran congregation agreed to pay to the Reformed congregation the sum of one hundred dollars for their one half of the grave-yard and to give them, in addition, a quit-claim of any right or privilege which they might have in the Reformed church property.

This act constituted the final dissolution of all union and partnership between the German Reformed and the Lutheran congregations of Germantown.



## *The Lutheran Congregation.*

In our account of the relation between the Reformed and the Lutheran congregations we have come down to the year 1879. In taking up the separate history of the Lutheran Church it will be necessary to go back again to the time of its organization.

This congregation dates its origin to the year 1809. It is one of the oldest Lutheran congregations in the State of Ohio. Its founders and fathers were, with probably one or two exceptions, natives of Pennsylvania, mostly from the county of Berks, and the township of Tolpehocken. They came from a portion of country where had labored the early fathers, Muhlenberg and his cotemporaries and associates. They therefore brought with them something of the spirit of these noble men. They cherished a profound regard for religion, and were extremely desirous to plant the church of their fathers in their new home. The first of them arrived here in the year 1804. As is the case in all new countries, a few years had to be spent by them in severe pioneer labor—the clearing of the soil and the erection of dwellings. During the first few years of their sojourn here they were, therefore, unable to give church and school much thought and attention. But busy as they were, they did not suffer their work and secular business to make them forget the cause



of religion and education. Of these they always felt their want, and just as soon as circumstances permitted they made every effort to secure their benefit. They were early visited by traveling missionaries—perhaps during the second or third year of their settlement. From among the names of this class of men who are said to have been here are preserved those of Paul Henkel, Markert, Forster, Mau, and Simon. They remained here a shorter or longer time—some of them a few weeks or months, others but a few days, and the last two settled here permanently.

Paul Henkel was the father of Andrew Henkel, and lived and labored mainly in Virginia. He very early penetrated the western wilderness—of which Ohio formed then a part—to visit distant settlements; but the year in which he visited for the first time the Miami and Twin valleys the writer has not been able to learn. Of Markert nothing is known but the name. When he was here, or how long he remained among this people, has not been ascertained. As the same name appears in the early annals of the Lutheran Church in Indiana, it is likely that he went from here to that state, and lived, labored, and died there. George Forster was one of the first missionaries in Ohio. Rev. Spielman, in his history of the Ohio Synod, speaks of him as being in Fairfield County in 1805. It is probable that he was the first Lutheran minister who visited the Lutherans in the Miami and Twin valleys. Rev.



Spielman relates of him the following incident. "For a time this robust and energetic father traveled and preached in the extensive field, embracing Perry, Fairfield, Pickaway, and other counties. When a later missionary visited and preached on the same territory, Forster lodged complaint against him before a special conference, accusing him of interference in his pastorate. The conference dissented from him, and desired to know what constituted his pastoral district. Upon this the tall and still vigorous man arose, and extending his arms, exclaimed, 'The whole north-west is my mission-field, and no one else shall be permitted to enter and interfere in it.' The conference, of course, was of a different opinion, and endeavored to bring the good man over to their own view." He died a few years after this, and is said to have been buried about six miles north of Somerset, near Zion Church, which he had been instrumental in organizing. S. Mau was a native Pennsylvanian, and came here at a very early period. He had been a soldier in the Revolutionary army, and was a somewhat eccentric character. Several times he changed his church relations, but confessed himself a Lutheran before his death. After his arrival here he supported himself by teaching school. He is said to have been the first school-teacher in the Twin Valley. His education was limited, and his preaching abilities were very deficient. When, in 1818, the Ohio Synod was organized, in Somerset, Ohio, Rev. Mau was present, and took an active





part in the organization. He lived to a high old age, and died about the year 1830, Rev. Andrew Henkel officiating at his funeral. Andrew Simon is the last of all the forenamed. He officiated as pastor to the congregations in German and Miami townships for a number of years—probably up to about the year 1812. He, too, was present at the organization of the Ohio Synod in 1818, and became one of its founders. Greatly lacking the gift of language, and scarcely able to give expression to his own thoughts, he was not very popular, nor very successful as a preacher, and very wisely abandoned the ministry, and turned his attention to the practice of medicine. He went from here to the State of Indiana, where he closed his life, in what year is not known.

After Simon gave up his labors in the Germantown congregation there was a vacancy here of several years' duration, during which the people were entirely destitute of the means of grace. They had grown tired of the sort of men who had been serving them as supplies. In Pennsylvania they had enjoyed the ministrations of learned and pious pastors, and such a one they desired also here for themselves. They wanted a man regularly and well trained for his calling, and ordained by an orthodox Lutheran synod. Such a man was at that time not easily to be had in this then far-off western country. There were then not a dozen Lutheran ministers in the whole State of Ohio. But they at last found the



man they wanted in the person of the Rev. John Caspar Dill.

### *Rev. John Caspar Dill*

May be said to have been the first pastor of the Lutheran congregation of Germantown. There were those who preceded him here, but they were mere supplies. He was a native German, born in Wertheim, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, on the second day of February, 1758. His parents were honest, God-fearing people, and were both members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. His father was a tawer by occupation, preparing buckskin for wearing apparel. In his day buckskin pants, vests, and gloves were worn, and the trade of a tawer was quite respectable and remunerative. Rev. Dill's father was a successful business man, well to do in the affairs of this world, and highly esteemed by his fellow-townsmen. He was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and was frequently called to municipal offices, to fill positions of trust and responsibility.

John Caspar was early sent to school, and here, as well as at the home of his parents, he was instructed in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion, and in the rudiments of a common-school education. From the common school he was promoted to the high school, or academy, of his native town. After completing thus his elementary educa-



tion, he was sent to the university, there to enter upon a thorough course of scientific study. The university of which he made choice was that of Giessen, in Hesse, at that time one of the best of Germany's institutions, and attracting students from all parts of Europe. At this ancient and renowned seat of learning John Caspar came in contact with men of world-wide fame—men who were eminent in learning and in piety. There is in possession of one of his descendants an autograph album, having belonged to Pastor Dill, in which are found the names of quite a number of his fellow-students, some of whom, later, attained to great celebrity for their learning and scientific attainments. This album also shows that the University of Giessen was then visited and patronized by students from far and near. Here, then, the subject of this biography enjoyed every advantage of the highest intellectual, moral, and social culture, which he seems to have well improved.

Having passed through the usual university *curriculum*—which seems to have been about the year 1786—he concluded to emigrate to America. He returned to his home in Wertheim, there to complete the necessary arrangements, and from thence to enter upon his voyage to the new world. An elder brother had preceded him to the United States, and it was in consequence of this brother's influence and persuasion that Rev. Dill decided to take this step. He embarked in Amsterdam, in



Holland, which was at that time the chief seaport of Europe. After a lengthy voyage he landed in Baltimore, Md., on the 4th of September, 1792. Here he remained a few weeks, and then proceeded to Philadelphia, where his brother was engaged in mercantile pursuits. In this city he tarried for some time, probably intending to make it his home, and enter into partnership with his brother. But if this was his plan it was soon thwarted. It was in the year 1792 that the yellow fever raged furiously in the city of Philadelphia, and carried off a large portion of its population. Among the victims of this scourge were Rev. Dill's brother and his wife. This loss, and the fearful ravages made by the pestilence, had so depressing and discouraging an effect on Mr. Dill that he determined to return again to his native country. But he found kind friends who interested themselves in his behalf, and through their persuasions he was influenced to remain and make this western world his permanent home.

From this time until the year 1802—a period of about ten years—Mr. Dill's occupation and place of residence are not well known. But as in this year he was ordained to the gospel ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, it may be rightly inferred that a part of this time was spent by him in preparing for the pastoral work. It may also be that he had been in the ministry some years before his ordination. For at that time the license system prevailed in the Lutheran Church, and not unfrequently men remained





licentiates for a period of from five to ten years. Thus these ten years may be nearly, if not entirely, accounted for.

Pastor Dill was ordained to the Christian ministry by the Synod of Pennsylvania—which was then convened in Reading, Pa.—on the 16th of June, 1802. In his ordination certificate mention is made of the fact that he was, at the time of his ordination, incumbent of the pastoral charge consisting of the congregations on the Jordan, Union, Egypt, and Trexlers, all of which were in Lehigh County, Pa. The officers of the synod, by whom his ordination papers are signed, are Frederick Schmidt and Frederick Schæffer, the former being the president and the latter the secretary of the synod. These, and other congregations in the same locality. Pastor Dill served until he removed from the State of Pennsylvania to the State of Ohio, including a period of at least about thirteen years. During this time—at what precise date is not known—he was joined in marriage to Miss Ann Maria Seiberling, a family name which is still familiar to the Lutheran Church in Ohio and Pennsylvania. The Seiberlings to whom Mrs. Dill belonged were then living in Wiesenbergh Township, Northampton County.

The removal of Mr. Dill to Ohio was brought about in the following manner: In the year 1814 the Rev. William Dechant, a minister of the Reformed Church, in Pennsylvania, came to Ohio, and visited Germantown and Miamisburg, and was very favorably



impressed with the country in the Miami Valley. The Lutherans of Germantown made inquiry of him as to their chances of securing a pastor for their congregation from Pennsylvania. He informed them that he thought he could aid them in the matter, and recommended to them Rev. Dill as a suitable man. Thereupon they addressed a letter to Mr. Dill, inviting him to become their pastor. Rev. Dechant, also, on his return to Pennsylvania, encouraged Mr. Dill to move to Ohio. In reply to the letter addressed to him, and as a result of the representations of Rev. Dechant, Mr. Dill sent a communication to the Lutherans of Germantown, and this in turn was answered by a formal call. Pastor Dill arrived in Germantown in the fall of the year 1815, and immediately took charge here, in connection with a number of other points, where, later, congregations were organized.

Pastor Dill's field of labor was very extensive, embracing several counties. He occupied, in his day, the frontier position among Lutheran pastors. All the territory west of him was unexplored mission ground. He therefore not only attended to the wants of his own large field, but made frequent visits to Indiana, to look after the interests of the church in that state. The labor which he performed was attended by peculiar hardships. During a great part of the year the roads were bad; the streams were many and deep, and being without bridges, they were dangerous to ford. The settlers lived



great distances apart, and when reached, the accommodations which they had to offer were of the simplest and plainest kind. Their log cabins generally contained but one room, answering the purpose of kitchen, parlor, and bed-room. The table-fare consisted principally of bread and bacon. Coffee and tea were luxuries in which few of them had the means to indulge. Mr. Dill's traveling was all done on horseback. A great portion of his time was spent in the saddle, hunting up the scattered members of his church, baptizing their children, and preaching whenever and wherever an opportunity offered itself. From these facts we may form some idea of the situation in which he was placed. Had he kept an accurate written account of his trials and adventures, his long and fatiguing journeys, his poor fare and poorer lodgings, his preaching in all sorts of places, the heat and cold which he endured, and the many incidents which occurred around the fireside by the big log chimney—such an account would at this time prove most intensely interesting, and constitute a most entertaining chapter of history. But it would also reveal a life of labor, privation, and suffering such as we of the present day can not easily form any conception of. The work of pastor and missionary, as performed by Rev. Dill, was no play; nor was there much pleasure in it except such as arose from the consciousness of doing good.



Mr. Dill preached at from probably six to ten places; but his main and strongest congregations were in Germantown and Miamisburg. He may with propriety be called the father of Lutheranism in and around these two places. The church in Germantown in which Mr. Dill preached was the log structure erected in the year 1810. Here his associate on the Reformed side was the Rev. Thomas Winters. The two got along with one another pretty peaceably — much more so than one would look for from so close a relationship as they held. Yet there was an occasional crossing of lances, and the hum of war and clash of arms was heard between the two ecclesiastics. But to the honor of both be it said, scenes of contention between them were very rare.

Pastor Dill was a thoroughly orthodox man, affected neither by rationalism on the one hand, nor by fanaticism on the other. He was firmly persuaded of the truth and the divine inspiration of the Scriptures and of their sufficiency as a rule of faith and practice. He was also a true Lutheran, firmly attached to, and vigorously advocating the doctrines of his church as set forth in her various confessional writings. A number of his sermons have been placed in the writer's hands for examination. They are sound and thorough expositions of the divine word, and exhibit a spirit of true and devout piety on the part of their author. Their style is terse and concise, and their language dignified and elevated, showing the accomplished scholar and





perfect master of his native tongue. He was also a man of attractive social qualities, gifted with a large share of wit and humor. At synod he would draw around him a crowd, and entertain his audience by anecdote and the recital of adventure. Synodical meetings in his day partook more largely of the nature of social gatherings than they now do. Pastors then were so isolated from one another that they rarely saw or heard of each other. When then they met at synod, there were true and heart-felt greetings and pleasure, and the spirit of cheer and joyousness was kept up during their convention. In their social circles Pastor Dill was always the central figure, as youthful and as happy as during his student life at the university. He was, moreover, a man of varied acquirements, well read in the ancient and the modern classics, a close and logical thinker, and a refined and chaste writer. As a speaker he was clear, practical, and impressive. Located as he was in a new country, with a superabundance of pastoral labor on his hands, there was neither incentive in his surroundings, nor time at his disposal to attempt authorship or to distinguish himself by literary performance. But had he lived at another time, and been placed amidst more favorable circumstances, he would doubtlessly have attained to some fame as a scholar and an author. He certainly possessed the natural talents, and the culture by education, for literary work. He was, besides, something of an artist, quite an adept in drawing, in painting, and



in carving, and a skillful performer on a number of musical instruments. During the latter part of his life, when waning physical strength confined him more closely to his home, he spent much time in these diversions.

He was connected with the synod of Pennsylvania until the year 1818, though unable to meet with it during his residence in Ohio. In this year was organized the synod of Ohio. Pastor Dill was present on the occasion and joined the organization, and thus became one of the founders of the first synod in Ohio. Subsequently he held different official positions in this body.

Rev. Dill lived and died a poor man. He owned a little home, consisting of an humble dwelling with a few acres of ground around it, but that was all he ever possessed, and did not exceed a few hundred dollars in value. His parishoners were mostly farmers, who were new beginners, and were struggling hard for the necessaries of life. They had no good market for their produce, and were sadly in want of money. Such a people are not able to pay their pastor a large salary. Hence Father Dill accumulated nothing in the way of worldly possessions, and when he died, he left his family little else than God's blessing, and his own worldly poverty. He departed this life in August, 1824, at the age of sixty-six years and five months. His wife, who was his junior in age, survived him by many years. The remains of both rest side by side in the Germantown cemetery.



After the death of Father Dill the congregation experienced some difficulty in securing another pastor. Lutheran ministers were at that time still scarce in Ohio. Their number did not exceed from twelve to fifteen in the whole state. Further east the church was somewhat better supplied with pastors, but those who lived there, when they desired to make a change, were reluctant to come to Ohio, which state was then regarded as "the far West." And in reality to remove from Pennsylvania or Maryland to Ohio was, at that time, a great undertaking. It occupied as much time, and was attended by as many hardships as does now a trip across the Atlantic Ocean. Nor were congregations in Ohio able to hold out pecuniary or other flattering inducements. They had nothing to offer but hard work, privation, and small pay. Hence it happened that after Father Dill's decease the Lutheran congregation in Germantown was without a pastor for a period of two years. In the year 1826 they succeeded in securing the services of the Rev. Andrew Henkel, of Somerset, Perry County, Ohio, whose biography we shall now proceed to give.



*Rev. Andrew Henkel*

Came of a distinguished ancestry, and was descended of a long line of Lutheran ministers. The founder of the family in this country was the Rev. Gerhart Henkle, who immigrated hither at a very early period. In the Fatherland he had occupied the position of court chaplain, but the earnestness with which he presented the truth, and especially in one of his sermons, greatly offended his sovereign, and to save himself all the trouble which this occurrence threatened to occasion him, he decided immediately to resign and emigrate to America. He arrived in Philadelphia in the year 1840, and located in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Here he assisted in the erection of a Lutheran church, but did not live to see it completed, being called away by death soon after his arrival. The son and grandson of Rev. Gerhart Henkel, from whom in direct line Andrew Henkle derives his descent, were Justus and Jacob Henkel. The latter was the father of the Rev. Paul Henkel, and he the father of Andrew Henkel.

Paul Henkle, born on the 15th day of December, 1754, and departing this life on the 17th day of November, 1825, occupies a prominent place in the early history of the Lutheran Church in this country. After preparing himself for the pastoral work under the instructions of the Rev. Krug, of Frederick,





Maryland, he entered the ministry at an advanced period in life, being ordained by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania in the year 1792. - Animated by a truly apostolic spirit, he threw himself into his work with a zeal, self-denial, and perseverance equaled by but few men since the days of the apostles. Amidst dangers, and the severest hardships, he made extensive mission tours, penetrating into the wilderness of the south and the west to its furthest limits, hunting up the scattered members of the Lutheran Church, baptizing their children, supplying them with books of devotion, organizing the people into congregations, and exhorting them to fidelity to their Maker and their church. He traveled in his own wagon, his wife, animated by the same missionary zeal, accompanying him, and both all the while defraying their own expenses. The means required came from the proceeds of a farm, which was cultivated by his sons. He was instrumental in organizing the synods of North Carolina and of Ohio. Of his six sons he trained five for the gospel ministry. . Yet, amidst so busy a life he managed to perform some literary labor. He published a collection of his own poems, a work on baptism, translated Luther's Smaller Catechism into the English language, and issued two Lutheran hymn-books—one in the German and the other in the English language. How this man, who had in his youth received but a common-school education, and who entered the ministry at the advanced age of thirty-eight years, was able to do



so many things, and do them so well, is almost beyond comprehension.

Of this man, and his wife Elizabeth, Andrew Henkel was the fourth son. He was born in Newmarket, Virginia, on the 21st day of October, 1790. Being the child of such parents, his early training and education were of a truly Christian character. Great pains were taken, early to instill into him the truths of the Christian religion and to develop within him a spirit of earnest piety. And these parents were not disappointed in their efforts and expectations. Andrew was a child of high animal spirits, full of life, and somewhat mischevious; but, with all that, he was devoutly religious. In later years he traced the beginning of his Christian life and experience back to his earliest childhood, and ascribed it, under the blessing of God, to parental training and instruction. When yet quite young, he learned the art of printing under the direction of his brother Ambrose. After serving a short apprenticeship in this occupation he began the study of theology under the supervision and instruction of his father and his brother Philip. He entered the ministry quite early in life—when in his twenty-first year. He was licensed to preach the gospel in the year 1811 by the Synod of Pennsylvania.

Shortly after his entrance into the ministry he and his brother Ambrose set out on a visit to Ohio, traveling the entire distance on horseback. As a result of this trip Mr. Henkel, in the following year, viz.:



in 1812, came to Ohio to remain, taking charge of congregations in Perry, Muskingum, Morgan, and other counties. His field of labor was very large, extending over a district of probably ten counties. He even went into Western Virginia and organized and supplied congregations there with Word and Sacrament. In this field he continued for the space of about fourteen years, during all of which time he resided in Somerset, Perry county, Ohio.

In the year 1815 he was united in marriage to Margaret Trout, daughter of George and Margaret Trout, of Somerset, Ohio. The Synod of Ohio was organized in the month of September, 1818. The meeting at which the organization was effected was held in Somerset, in Mr. Henkel's charge, and he was one of the chief movers in the formation of this body. The pastors present were seventeen in number. Their names are as follows: J. Stauch, Paul Henkel, G. H. Weygandt, M. Steck, Sr., J. C. Dill, Leist, Reinhardt, Huet, A. Henkel, M. Steck, Jr., Schneider, Weyer, Mohler, A. Simon, S. Mau. Charles Henkel, and M. Wachter were licensed at this meeting. Andrew Henkel remained a licentiate for at least ten years. This unusual length of time is owing to two facts. Previous to the organization of the Synod of Ohio, candidates laboring in this state were required to appear in person before the Synod of Pennsylvania when they desired ordination. Mr. Henkel possessed probably neither the means, nor had the time at his disposal, to do this. After the



year 1818 he might have been ordained in Ohio, but he had in the Rev. Stauch a formidable opponent, who, for some reason, resisted his ordination, and, being a man of great authority in the synod, was successful in his opposition to Mr. Henkel. In what year Pastor Henkel received ordination is not known to the writer, but it can not have been later than the year 1824.

During his residence in Somerset Mr. Henkel trained a number of young men for the Lutheran ministry, among whom are J. Wagenhals, Samuel Kemmerer, and James Manning. Manning was the first, and for a number of years the only Lutheran minister in Ohio, who exclusively officiated in the English language. He was drawn into the ministry in rather a peculiar manner.

Manning was a boatman by occupation, and in character about the same as men of that pursuit usually are. Rev. Henkel was giving instructions to a class of catechumens, of whom the sister of James Manning was one. James, at best, disliked preachers, but he had a special grudge against Mr. Henkel because he had "turned the head" of his own sister. His resolution was quickly taken. He was going to break up this business of catechising. The day for catechetical instruction came around, and James Manning took his seat in the rear part of the church. Mr. Henkel began his instructions and Mr. Manning began to interrupt and to contradict him. Henkel grew neither angry at the young man, nor did he





reprove him, but in a kind manner requested him to tarry until after the close of the services. In the interview which followed, Mr. Henkel, by his geniality and suavity of manner, so won upon the heart of the young boatman that he was utterly conquered and subdued. He went away with his eyes cast down, and ashamed of his conduct. When the time for the next meeting for catechising came Manning again made his appearance, slowly came up to Mr. Henkel, and with a good deal of embarrassment, requested the privilege of attending his instructions. Saul had become Paul. The request was cheerfully granted by the young pastor. From this time forward Manning became a diligent student of the Scriptures, soon united with the church, and then began his preparations for the Gospel ministry.

This incident well illustrates some of the peculiar characteristics of these two remarkable men. Henkel had his temper under perfect control, and even when much displeased could assume an air of undisturbed quiet, and exercise the utmost urbanity and civility. He could take an affront with apparent good nature, and at the same time treat the offender with the greatest cordiality. Manning, on the other hand, was impulsive, quick and irate, pugnacious, and ready at all times to resent an offense offered to his person. But he was a man, also, of warm and tender heart, appreciative of kindness, and most susceptible to its influence. He could never be driven or forced, but could be persuaded and led with ease.



The fourteen years which Mr. Henkel spent in his first charge were years of severe trial and arduous labor. But being gifted with a cheerful mind, and favored with a vigorous physical constitution, he performed his work and bore his hardships without any visible effects on his health. He accomplished a great deal of good in this field by organizing congregations, confirming the people in the faith of their church, instructing the young, and laying the foundation of his work broad and deep. And to this day he is still remembered in that locality, and spoken of with affection and reverence.

In the year 1826 Rev. Henkel received a call from the congregations of Germantown and vicinity which he deemed it his duty to accept, especially as he was assured that the charge which he had hitherto served would find a very acceptable pastor in the person of his brother Charles. In the fall, therefore of this same year he moved to Germantown, and entered upon the field of labor in which he spent the remainder of his life. Here, as in his former field, the presence of his hand was soon felt, and the effects of its guidance and force soon became visible. Hitherto the people had worshiped in the German language exclusively. There had been a demand for English services during the ministry of Father Dill already, but not being sufficiently conversant with the English language he was unable to comply with the demand. Henkel, being equally proficient in both the German and the English tongues, at once

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introduced English services into all the churches of his charge. In this he was opposed by a few of the older members, but their opposition found but little sympathy, and hence exerted no perceptible effect. In Germantown, at his first confirmation, from sixty to seventy persons, mostly young people, presented themselves at the altar to renew and assume for themselves their baptismal covenant.

A few years after his arrival the congregation in Germantown, by his persuasion and under his lead, built a new church, a brick edifice, which, at the time of its erection, was regarded as one of the best churches in this part of the country. The attendance on the divine services increased, the membership grew larger, and the congregation enjoyed general prosperity and peace.

Not only in the church, however, but also in the community at large, did Mr. Henkel's talents and influence make themselves felt. By means of his sagacity and practical tact he became at once one of the leading citizens of Germantown. He was consulted and called to office and public position when important enterprises were about to be entered on and when weighty interests were pending, and was always zealous in the promotion of any useful public improvement. He also became prominent by means of his business operations. For, although his pastoral charge was very large, consisting of from eight to a dozen congregations and preaching points, scattered over several counties, he yet found time to



engage in secular pursuits. By this means he came in contact with men of all classes, and his name became extensively known beyond his immediate sphere of action.

Another means which gained him a widespread popularity was his connection with the order of Free Masons. Of this order he was a prominent member and an active propagator. He held high official positions in it, and traveled much in its interests, organizing and establishing lodges in various places, and giving instructions in the mystic arts and ritual of the order.

But that which gave him greatest prominence was his skill and talent in controversy. Around him were the uneducated preachers of the minor sects—men who relied on a supposed inspiration, instead of on study and education, in the work of preaching the Word. They were men who gloried in their ignorance, because they regarded ignorance as a virtue, and because ignorance was about all they could boast of. They held in contempt all book learning and book knowledge, and spoke of two kinds of religion—a book religion and a heart religion—of the latter of which they claimed to hold a monopoly. These men, for the building up of their own churches, were largely depending on Lutheran material. To be the more successful in their efforts, they often deemed it expedient to assail Mr. Henkel personally, as also to cry down and misrepresent the doctrines of his church. Some of the rasher sort of





these men would even have the temerity to challenge him to debate, but in these contests the poor fellows usually came away so badly worsted that they never offered a second challenge, nor made a second assault.

There was a time when almost the entire Lutheran Church in this country had fallen away from the doctrines of the Reformers, when rationalism had seized upon and led away some, and fanaticism others, and when both faith and practice had become corrupt. Under the name of Lutheranism all sorts of men were preaching all sorts of doctrines, and introduced practices which were foreign to the policy of the historic Lutheran Church, in conflict with her doctrine, and subversive of her distinctive life and faith. It seemed then as if the church of the Reformation were about to lose her identity in this country. There remained, of course, a leaven of true faith, a few faithful confessors and teachers. To these belonged the major portion of the pastors of the Synod of Ohio, who, amidst this widespread apostacy, remained true to the ancient landmarks of their church. They were firmly persuaded that the confessions of their church embodied the truth of God's word, and still more firmly persuaded were they that the so called new measures, which were sought to be introduced, were subversive of the true faith, of good order and morality. Among the men in the Ohio Synod, who continued thus faithful, Andrew Henkel was one of the staunchest and foremost.



He was, on the points in dispute, a Lutheran without evasion or mental reservation, and ready to defend his faith regardless of consequences. And he did so defend it, was compelled to defend it by word and by pen. But to do so required at that time no small degree of courage and moral firmness.

The men who then openly confessed and defended the Lutheran doctrine, and upheld Lutheran usage, were cried down as symbolists and formalists, as men of no experimental piety, and as semi-Romanists. Methodists, Baptists and others joined pseudo-Lutherans in their crusade against them. Especially was this the case at the time when the church in Ohio began to grow in influence and importance. As long as the church in this state was weak, and had nothing to offer but hard work and poor pay, Mr. Henkel and the men who believed and taught as he did had the field all to themselves, but when wealth took the place of poverty, and respectability the place of obscurity, men crowded in from eastern states and sought charges in Ohio. Some of these had abandoned the faith of the church whose name they had assumed, and were hostile to all that was distinctively Lutheran. They talked of an American Lutheran Church, and American Lutheranism, as a church and a system of doctrine different in spirit and in essence from the church and doctrine of the Reformers, and an improvement on them. They advocated, and practically adopted the revival system of the Methodists, laid little or no stress on the



sacraments as means of grace, and either openly opposed or else quietly neglected the instruction and catechization of the young previous to confirmation. They connected at first with the Synod of Ohio, but soon it became apparent that between them and the class of men represented by Rev Andrew Henkel there could be no harmonious co-operation within the same body. Conflicts arose and disputes sprang up, which caused bitterness of feeling and total alienation, and resulted in the organization of new synods. Thus the lines were sharply drawn between the new and the old measure parties. But with this the controversy and trouble did not stop, but only grew in warmth and in bitterness. The new-measure men were unsparing in their denunciations of the old-measure men, and felt the stronger because encouraged and urged on by other denominations, and by a general tendency of the Lutheran Church in the same direction. It was a dark and sorrowful time to the few faithful ones. They, of course, did all in their power to stem the current that seemed to carry the church down to the gulf of destruction. Hence from pulpit and in papers was heard the cry of war, and the contest raged fiercely. Congregations became divided, and pastoral charges were rent in sunder. With controversy and aggressive interference in congregation and charge came the exhibition of carnal passion. There were acrimonious disputes, criminations and recriminations, personal character and reputation were assailed and defamed, and



among the laity, always less restrained than the clergy, it often came to blows and other acts of violence.

Pastor Henkel, being one of the firmest, ablest, and most outspoken men on the side of old measures, came in for a full share of the anathemas of the other party. At him more than at any one else were aimed their attacks. Around his head the storm raged most fiercely. But he stood as firm and immovable as a rock amidst storm and waves, and never for one moment wavered in his position, or doubted the final triumph of his cause. He not only encouraged his associates to fidelity and firmness, but freely responded to the calls of the people who, from every direction, came and applied to him to come to their assistance and defend them against their enemies. In the conflict, thus inaugurated, he wielded a vast influence, and achieved great things for the church. There is a great debt owing by the Lutheran Church to this stout-hearted, brave, and fearless man.

The men of the new theology and new measures had, in many instances, more zeal than discretion. They foolishly thought it to be their duty, to go among Mr. Henkel's parishioners, and in their presence charge him with heresy, and thus stir up revolt and rebellion against him at home. Several of them, to carry out this purpose, visited Germantown and challenged him to public debate. The first, who thus made his appearance, was the Rev. Zerfass, a man who was as ignorant as he was presumptuous





and conceited. He came to Germantown during the year 1840. Mr. Henkel and his congregation threw wide open the doors of their church to this champion of a new Lutheranism. His declared object was to prove that Mr. Henkel was no Lutheran. He entered the church in a very pompous manner, bringing with him a large chest, which was carried in by two men, and which he caused to be believed was full of books and authorities, by the aid of which he would carry his point and annihilate Mr. Henkel, but which turned out to be as empty as his own head. A large concourse of people had collected to listen to the debate. Zerfass opened the discussion, and Henkel followed in reply. The contest proved itself a very unequal one. Zerfass was weak in argument, confused in his ideas, and hesitating in speech. Henkel, on the other hand, on this as all similar occasions, was calm and self-possessed, and perfect master of himself. He was thoroughly conversant with the doctrines and history of his church, and always ready to express himself in the happiest manner. This time he proved himself fully master of the situation. In a speech of some length he so completely used up his opponent that the latter abandoned the contest at once and left the town as speedily as he was able to get away from it. And the sentiment of the entire community at the time was "served him right."

The chief and most active of the new measuremen of that day were Abraham Reck and Solomon



Ritz. They were the apostles of the new gospel, a sort of ecclesiastical freebooters, entering uninvited and uncalled peaceable charges and congregations, creating schisms and strife, and carrying on their work with a high hand. As Henkel was a strong man on the one side, and Reck on the other, it was proposed to have the two meet, but Reck could never muster sufficient courage to challenge Henkel to public debate. But when, in the year 1844, Mr. Henkel removed from Germantown to Goshen, Indiana; where he remained two and a half years, Mr. Reck quickly took advantage of the former's absence, and the vancancy of the charge, and came to Germantown, bringing with him several families which were to form the nucleus of a new-measure Lutheran congregation, and were finally to assimilate to themselves all the Lutherans in the town and its vicinity. It was a cunningly devised scheme, and circumstances seemed to favor its success. The people were as sheep without a shepherd. Their pastor had left them, and they knew not whether he would ever return again, or where to look for another man to take his place. Reck was a good preacher, and a zealous and persevering man, and made friends and followers wherever he went. Anywhere else almost his plan would have succeeded; but in Germantown his mission proved a complete failure. New measurism was to the people here nothing but Methodism introduced into the Lutheran Church, and with that they were too familiar to receive it



as anything different from what it was. But above all it was owing to Mr. Henkel's instructions and influence that Mr. Reck, notwithstanding that he made the most strenuous efforts, during a period of three years did not even make one disciple from the Lutheran Church of this place. The people were too well-rooted and grounded in the doctrines and usages of their church, to follow Reck or any one of his party. Hence, when Mr. Henkel returned from Goshen, which was in the year 1847, Mr. Reck abandoned the field in despair, and went away.

Mr. Henkel resided a year or two in Lewisburg, whilst he was pastor in Germantown. Here he was drawn into a public discussion with the Rev. W. C. Barnett, another champion of new measures. This debate lasted three days, and attracted an immense concourse of people. The whole doctrinal controversy, which has grown out of the subject of the so-called new measures in the Lutheran Church, and that has ever since been agitating her, and is not fully settled yet, was gone over by these two men on this occasion. And it is remarkable how clear, correct, and far-reaching were the views of Pastor Henkel, set forth by him on this occasion. This debate took place in 1849. The two men were pretty evenly matched, and both claimed the victory over the other. The substance of this debate is given in the *Lutheran Standard*, to which the interested reader is referred.

Rev. Henkel was a party to many other controversies and discussions beside those mentioned above,



but as they related to the same or kindred subjects as these, it is deemed unnecessary to make any extended allusions to them. But there is one more subject of this kind which demands mention, and this is the secret society controversy. This arose within the Joint Synod of Ohio, of which Rev. Henkel was a member. It was in the year 1852 when this matter was made a subject of deliberation and action. The synod passed a series of resolutions relative to secret and other unchurchly societies, to one of which Mr. Henkel took exception. This became the occasion of a prolonged and bitter contest. Year after year, the matter was discussed at the meetings of the synod, resolutions were passed, reports adopted, complaints made, charges and countercharges preferred, investigations had, censures expressed, etc. Mr. Henkel wrote, published, and circulated, three different controversial tracts, in which he defends his position as a member of two secret orders, those of Free Masonry and Odd Fellowship. This controversy occasioned Mr. Henkel a vast amount of trouble and vexation, and alienated from him some of his warmest and life-long friends. It began during the latter part of his life, and continued to the hour of his death, and proved a bitter drop in the cup of his declining days. But as the writer has in course of preparation a treatise, in which he expects to present an extended account of the entire secret society agitation in the Lutheran Church, and which he intends, at no distant day,





to give to the public, he here drops this matter without any further allusion to it.

We will now present some particular phases of Rev. Henkel's life and character.

As a preacher he was more instructive than eloquent. His sermons were faithful delineations of scriptural truth. They were addressed to the intellect and the heart alike. He never aimed at undue excitement of feeling, which is transitory and evanescent in its effects. His was the calm, argumentative, and closely syllogistic mode of preaching. His sermons were systematic, presenting his thoughts in logical succession, and were faithfully textual. His ideas were clothed in language which was dignified and elevated, and yet so plain and simple that his discourses were adapted to the humblest as well as the strongest intellect. His instructions did not only produce deep and firm conviction, but they also had this peculiar excellence—that they were easily remembered. He generally spoke without manuscript or notes, and was never in want of ideas or words to express them in. In the pulpit he was perfectly self-possessed, and always serious and earnest. He was always ready. On one occasion a conference of ministers convened in his own church. The speaker for the occasion did not make his appearance, and none of the rest present were willing to take his place. Henkel ascended the pulpit, and, without previous preparation or time for reflection, preached a sermon that elicited the admi-



ration of all present. He shunned all attempts at show, seemed entirely to forget self whilst speaking, and aimed only at instructing the mind and edifying the heart. Whatever else may be said of Mr. Henkel as a man—and there are those who would disparage his character—as a preacher he proved himself one of the most efficient and useful men of his day. His pulpit labors and influence are still felt. Those to whom he ministered in his youth and later years are distinguished for their intelligent apprehension of doctrine, and their warm attachment to their church and its usages. Some may call them Henkelites, but they are Lutherans, “dyed in the wool.”

As a writer and an author Rev. Henkel does not occupy a first place. But his talents in this department are respectable. Among his literary productions may be mentioned his three controversial tracts treating of secret orders. Viewing them simply in their literary aspect, we find their subject matter logically arranged, and systematically treated. The arguments in favor of the position therein assumed, are as strong and as clearly stated as the subject admits of, and the language employed is dignified and expressive. These tracts exhibit a well disciplined mind and vigorous thinker on the part of their author.

Another of Mr. Henkel's productions is a treatise on Infant Baptism, written in the form of a dialogue. In reference to this work a committee of his synod,



of which Rev. D. Worly was chairman, say : " We hail with pleasure this little book which we doubt not will find a welcome place in all our English families. It is emphatically, in its contents and style, so far as we have had time to examine it, a book for the times and for the country in which it is our lot to labor. Written in an easy and popular style, it can not fail to please and interest the reader ; scriptural and truthful in its representations, it will guide the earnest inquirer aright ; meeting the popular and dangerous objections to the doctrine of baptism, as held by the church, ably and convincingly, it will be a strong weapon of truth against error in the hands of the humble Christian. We, therefore, heartily recommend it to our pastors and people."

In connection with a collection of his father's poems Mr. Henkel published some of his own poetical productions which make up a very readable and entertaining volume. This book bears the significant title of *Zeitvertreib*.

There is, moreover, extant among Mr. Henkel's writings, in finished manuscript, a little treatise on the *Anxious Bench*. This, if printed in the ordinary pamphlet style, would make a tract of from sixty to seventy pages.

As a business man Mr. Henkel bore an unblemished reputation. He was generally successful in his enterprises. His business ventures were varied. In some of them he realized large profits. He was at one time possessed of a large amount of property,



but before he died he had become very much reduced in means. Of this part of Pastor Henkel's life, the writer can not approve. His charge was sufficiently large to claim all his time, and was able to furnish him a competent support. His secular pursuits could not but have a secularizing effect on his own mind, and unfavorably influence his parishioners. But it was then the order of the day in this western country, that ministers followed secular pursuits in connection with their sacred calling. With some this became a necessity in order to supplement their meager salary. This was doubtlessly the case with Mr. Henkel during the earlier years of his ministry. But when the habit is once formed, it is often continued after the necessity has ceased, and that is the effect it had on him.

As a controversialist Mr. Henkel obtained a reputation not enjoyed by any of his cotemporaries. He had trained himself for controversy from early youth, and delighted in it. What gave him the pre-eminence and success over most of his opponents was his perfect self-possession. In debate he never suffered himself to become angry, excited, or confused. With a strong nervous constitution, and a digestion that was absolutely perfect, he was able at all times to hold his temper under perfect control. He was also a very fair man, never resorting to sophistry, or otherwise taking undue advantage of an antagonist, in order to carry his point. Personality he avoided as much as possible. The only exception he is known ever to





have made in this was, when he spoke of the errors and follies of some of the sects. On such occasions he would sometimes suffer himself to become somewhat personal, and be unsparing of his lash. He was a bitter enemy to the anxious bench and all that pertains to it, and whenever he happened to get on this subject, he would lay it on his adversary thick and fast. But even then, he would not suffer himself to lose his temper. If he happened immediately after to meet the man whom he had handled so roughly, he would extend his hand to him and treat him with the greatest cordiality. He was a man of great resoluteness and firmness, adhered to his convictions with the utmost tenacity, and no matter to what subject they pertained, religion, politics, or anything else, never shrank from avowing and defending them both in private and in public.

In the matter of discipline, whether in his own family, in the congregation, or in the synod, Mr. Henkel was exceedingly indulgent and forbearing. He rarely ever reproved or punished a child of his, and was very reluctant to proceed with rigor against an offending church-member, holding that the preaching of the Word was the most efficient means of correcting wrongs. If it was at all possible he would speak kindly of the dead. Fault has been found with him for this. It has been said, that he eulogized men whose lives and examples called for censure and warning rather than for praise and approval. Doubtlessly, his kindliness of heart



betrayed him into unwarranted extremes on this point. When spoken to on this matter, as he sometimes was, he would reply, that he would rather go too far on the side of mercy, than on the side of condemnation. It is even said, that he went so far in this, as to lay himself open to the charge of universalism.

In his synod he was for many years the most towering figure, exercised a commanding influence, and was largely instrumental in shaping its policy and directing its course. Again and again was he called to preside over its deliberations. When important measures were pending, he was frequently made chairman of the committee, to whom the matter was entrusted for adjustment. He was one of the founders of the Synod of Ohio, and bore a chief part in its organization. He was also one of the prime movers in the organization of the Joint Synod's theological institution, for a number of years, was identified with it as a director, and gave it his warmest support until his relation with it was disturbed by the secret society agitation. His counsel was sought by his brethren in synod upon all questions of ecclesiastical interest, and his advice was usually followed. He enjoyed the utmost respect and confidence of his associates.

As a Christian, Pastor Henkel was devout and earnest, free from all ostentation and cant. His was a cheerful, open piety, having very little of the severe and nothing of the ascetic in it. He did not



make the kingdom of God to consist in eating and drinking, and did not carry his religion in his clothes. On mere externals he laid no stress, and in diet and wearing apparel claimed and exercised all the freedom which by Divine right belongs to the Christian. Having had pious parents, by whom he was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, his Christian faith began its development in him from earliest childhood, and grew up in him with the growth of his years, steadily and continuously, until Christian childhood and youth merged into the full and mature stature of Christian manhood. He knew no particular time to which he might point as the period of his conversion. His Christian faith and life ran back so far, that to him there was no conscious beginning of them, but were lost in the dim and unrecalled period of his earliest childhood. A spiritual life thus begun and nurtured is usually succeeded by a Christian manhood that has more of the settled than the doubting, more of the calm and meditative than the fervid and the impulsive, and this effect exhibited itself as a controlling element in the Christian life and labors of Pastor Henkel.

In personal appearance, Andrew Henkel is said to have resembled his father, Paul Henkel; tall, nearly six feet in height, and as straight and erect as an Indian. His step was firm, and his bearing dignified. His health was almost perfect. Of indigestion, rheumatism, and the like ailments, he never knew anything from personal experience. He bore to the



last the extremes of heat and cold without much discomfort. He dressed always with neatness and taste, and paid much attention to his personal appearance.

As a friend, companion, and pastor, Mr. Henkel was genial and affable. Gifted with wit and humor, and always cheerful, his company was sought and proved pleasant and agreeable. He had many very warm friends. He did not do much pastoral visiting, owing to his many engagements in and out of the church, but whenever he called on any of his parishioners, he was a most welcome guest. He was a decidedly popular man wherever he was known. During the latter part of his life, owing to the position he assumed on political questions during the war of the Rebellion, he incurred the ill will and displeasure of a few, yet even they could not go so far as to show active enmity toward him.

Mr. Henkel was a man of varied talents. He spoke English and German with equal fluency. He was equally at home in various handicrafts, any tool almost coming ready to his hands. He wrote poetry and painted landscapes. He understood the printing and binding of books. He often changed his secular pursuits, following in turn merchandizing, farming, milling, and was at once at home in his new pursuit, and generally successful. There remains now only to be told the story of the last years and of the closing scene of Mr. Henkel's life.

With the evening of his day, came shades and





clouds that obscured his hitherto clear and sunny horizon. The Masonic question occasioned him a vast deal of annoyance and grief. Schisms occurred in the Joint Synod, in which himself was an actor, and for which he received his share of blame. His political course made him enemies and lost him support. His financial condition was not one of prosperity. His wife was attacked by disease, and was laid on a bed of sickness on which she lingered for many months, and finally, in June 1866, was taken away from his side by death. He himself was beginning to feel the infirmities of age, and found himself compelled to curtail his labors.

In the year 1865 he proposed to the vestries of his charge, that they call an assistant. Their choice fell on his son-in-law, Rev. J. L. Stirewalt. The charge consisted then of three congregations—Germantown, Farmersville, and Slifers, all of which required services in both the English and the German languages. Rev. Henkel, from this time on, attended to the German, and Rev. Stirewalt to the English services, and thus these two men labored on until death called them away.

In August 1869, Rev. Henkel entered into a second marriage, making choice for his companion of Mrs. Elizabeth Schwartzle, a widow lady of excellent character. With her he lived in wedded life only eight months. Just two weeks before his death he removed from Germantown to Farmersville, and soon after he took his bed, from which he was



destined to rise no more. He moved on Tuesday, preached his last sermon in Germantown on Sunday following, took his bed on Thursday of this week, and died on Saturday of the week following, departing this life on the 23d of April, 1870, having attained to the age of 79 years, 6 months, and 2 days. "His death," says the writer of his obituary, "was calm and triumphant. The faith which he had preached to others gave him consolation and comfort in his last hours. On Monday, April 25th, his mortal remains were brought to Germantown, attended by a large number of parishioners and friends, where appropriate services were held in the Lutheran Church by Pastors G. W. Busby, W. A. Bowman, and C. Albrecht. His body was then conveyed to the cemetery near the town, and committed to the grave."

Mr. Henkel was the father of eleven children, six of whom are still living at this date of writing. He labored in the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ohio, fifty-eight years, forty-four of which were spent in the Germantown charge. He was in union with the Joint Synod of Ohio, until the year 1867, when with his district, the English, he united with the General Council. During his ministry in his last field he performed 1,003 baptisms, 877 confirmations, 495 marriages, and officiated at 683 funerals.

If now we once more look back upon the life and labors of this servant of God, we feel constrained,



in view of what he was and of what he has done, to bear him an honorable testimony. He was a great, a good, and a useful man. Mistakes he may have made, errors he may have committed, faults and infirmities he may have had, but it is not too much to say, that such were his many virtues, and his great excellencies of character, such his industry and the eminent services which he has rendered the church and the cause of Christ, as to overshadow and outweigh all his defects. His memory deserves to be cherished, and his name to be handed down to future generations as a missionary and an apostle, as a pioneer and a founder of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the State of Ohio.

The death of Pastor Henkel left his associate sole incumbent of the Germantown charge. As the field was large, and sufficiently wealthy to sustain two pastors, the subject of a division was agitated, which resulted in the formation of two pastorates out of the one, the Farmersville and the Slifer's congregations constituting the one, and the Germantown congregation the other. The former called the Rev. Amos Poorman as their pastor, and the latter retained the Rev. J. L. Stirewalt.



*Rev. J. L. Stirewalt*

Was the second son of Rev. John N. Stirewalt, and his wife Hannah, and was born in Waynesboro, Augusta county, Virginia, April 12, 1832. His mother was the daughter of Rev. Paul Henkel, and the sister of Rev. Andrew Henkel. Being, on his mother's side, descended of the Henkels, he came of a long line of Lutheran ministers, and of a very worthy ancestry. He lost his father when quite young, and was early left to the sole training and care of his mother. There were left to this mother three children, all sons, Paul, Julius, and Spener. These their father by his own prayers before his death, had consecrated to the work of the gospel ministry, and on his deathbed had communicated his desire concerning them to his wife. The early advantages, however, for education, possessed by these children outside of their home, were exceedingly limited. But they had a mother of rare excellencies, and she, remembering her husband's dying wish, by her diligent, faithful, and self-denying labors, supplied to her sons what was lacking them in the schools, with a view of preparing them for the sacred calling of the gospel ministry. Accordingly allusions are made in the diary of the subject of this sketch, of three boys gathering every evening around the candlestand with their books, and a firm and loving mother for their teacher. This was the





foundation of their education. And this pious mother lived to see all three of them educated and inducted into the sacred office in which their father had laid down his life. Yea, more, she lived to see them all laid down in honored and peaceful graves. She herself, however, did not long survive the death of her last, her son Julius. She now rests by the side of the latter, and of her brother Andrew in the Germantown cemetery. On the 7th of May, two days after her death, on a quiet and lovely Sunday morning, after service in the Lutheran Church, conducted by the writer, we gently laid away her earthly remains in the grave.

From 1845 to 1847 Julius was employed as a dry goods clerk in Winchester, Virginia. During these two years he attended divine service in the Lutheran Church of that town, then under the pastoral care of Rev. C. P. Krauth, now of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. From 1848 to 1849 he attended school at the New Market Academy, Virginia. While in attendance at this school he confirmed his baptismal covenant, and became an active member of the church of the place. The time had now come when the great question of his future calling was to be decided. He began the study of medicine, but soon abandoned it, and gave his attention to law. This also becoming distasteful to him, he decided to enter upon the study of theology. He went to Columbus, Ohio, where he spent the years 1851 and 1852 in the college and seminary of the Joint Synod. He



left Columbus, in 1853, his health having failed him, and returned to New Market, Virginia, where he completed his theological studies under the direction of his uncles, Revs. Ambrose Henkel and Jacob Stirewalt. In 1854 he was ordained a deacon by the Tennessee Synod with the right to preach, to catechise, baptize, etc., but not to perform the acts of confirmation and marriage. His first labor in the ministry was that of an assistant to his uncle in his large and laborious charge. On the 11th of September, 1854, he was married to Vandalena, daughter of the Rev. Andrew Henkel, of Germantown, Ohio. Soon after his marriage he was elected principal of the New Market female seminary for one year. In this position he was assisted by his wife. The school prospered under his management. His labors at this time were truly arduous. After the duties of the school-room during the week, he preached regularly on every Lord's Day. This labor proved too great a task for his feeble constitution. Accordingly he resigned his principalship after one year's service, and in 1855 accepted a call from the East Germantown charge, in Wayne county, Indiana. Here he entered upon a sphere of labor more congenial to his tastes, and better adapted to the exercise of his peculiar gifts, for, Providence had endowed him in an eminent degree with those talents which so well fitted him for the office of preacher and pastor. With characteristic earnestness and zeal he entered upon his work. He found the field somewhat



divided, but soon succeeded in restoring harmony and peace. The congregations grew in numbers, in faith, and in charity.

In the year 1856 he was fully ordained to the gospel ministry. In 1858 he accepted a call to the Lima charge where he succeeded his brother Paul who had been removed by death. Here he soon won the hearts of the people, and the respect and esteem of the entire community. But in one year his health failed to such an extent as to compel him to resign and undertake an agency for the *Lutheran Standard* in the Southern States. During this time he was a regular contributor to the columns of the *Standard*, in which he first exhibited his ability as a descriptive and humorous writer. But this change also did not improve his health, and he resigned his agency and retired to his mother's farm in Virginia.

Whilst engaged in farming, the war of the Rebellion broke out. The part which he acted during this trying time is most creditable to his head and his heart. He was opposed to the secession of his state from the Union, and clearly foresaw that the act could only bring with it suffering and disaster. He did all he could in his humble sphere to prevent the consummation of the act, but did not assume an openly hostile attitude to it, knowing very well that, in the excited state of feeling then prevailing, that would be foolish and dangerous. He, however, was and remained during those few years of fratricidal strife a decided Union man, and patiently shared in



the sufferings, to the infliction of which he had contributed nothing, nor was in the least degree to be held responsible, or to be blamed for. And these sufferings were great. He sustained the loss of property, endured fear and anxiety of mind, and was subjected to constant disturbance and annoyance. The locality in which he lived, the Valley of the Shenandoah, was the ever repeated scene of conflict between the armies of the two sections. At one time it was occupied by the Northern, and at another by the Southern army. When the Union army held possession Southern sympathizers were oppressed and punished, and when the Rebel army gained possession Union men were made to suffer. Hold to what side they would, the people were persecuted. Their position was therefore a most trying and painful one, and attended by innumerable evils. Mr. Stewart labored faithfully for the alleviation of the suffering of this time, without partiality to friend or bitterness to foe. He attended to the sick and wounded soldiers of both armies, comforted, fed, and nursed them as opportunity presented itself. At the close of the war he was for awhile engaged in the laudable work of collecting money to provide artificial limbs for maimed and crippled soldiers, and succeeded in gathering a large sum for this purpose. Referring to this period, one of his most intimate friends says: "His cheerful, hopeful, and believing spirit never forsook him. Even amid the clash of arms, and the tumult of war, his desire to do good





to the souls and bodies of men manifested itself in the self-sacrificing spirit with which he devoted himself to works of charity and mercy."

The war closed after a period of four years, but its rigors were felt long after, in the effects which it had wrought. The beautiful and fertile valley of the Shenandoah was one vast field of destruction and devastation. Fences were gone, houses and barns lay in ashes, and cattle and horses had disappeared. Our brother had lost all his earthly possessions and desired to turn away from the place where every object recalled events which brought pain to his heart and tears to his eyes.

In the month of August, 1865, the English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio, held its annual sessions in Germantown, Ohio. Rev. Stirewalt was present as a visitor. Rev. Henkel was entering on his declining years. The attention of the congregation was called to Mr. Stirewalt, and they concluded to call him as associate pastor. In the month of November of the same year he moved to German-town, to divide with Rev. Henkel the labors of the charge. Here his efforts were crowned with great success. Large classes of catechumens were instructed and confirmed by him, and others who, during the many years of Mr. Henkel's ministry for one cause and another, had become alienated from the church, returned and renewed their membership. In 1867 the church which had been built in 1830 was partially taken down, was rebuilt and enlarged, and



made quite an attractive place of worship. In the execution of this undertaking the main burden rested on Mr. Stirewalt. He overlooked and superintended the work, and secured the money to pay for material and labor.

In 1869 the General Council appointed him as its Home Missionary, to travel and labor chiefly in the State of Indiana. To this work he devoted one half of his time, giving the other half to his charge. This appointment he filled for several years with commendable industry and success. Whilst engaged in this work, he wrote a series of letters, which were published in the Lutheran and Missionary, in which he gave the result of his observation and experiences, over the signature of "Indiana." They were highly entertaining and amusing, as well as instructive. He was a close observer, a good judge of men, was gifted with a large share of ready wit, and had a keen sense for the ridiculous. His quick and penetrating eye would detect what others would pass by unnoticed, and would extract a laugh from events and objects, in which others saw nothing to interest or to amuse. These gifts and peculiarities he exhibits in a marked manner in his "Indiana" letters. For this reason they were received with great favor by the readers of the Lutheran.

If there was one passion more largely developed in him than any other, it was his desire to be well thought of by everybody. He had an intense craving for the esteem and good will of all men. As



this had always been an absorbing element of his nature, he had made it his lifelong study to please men, and win their friendship and affection. In this effort he was successful. In the art of captivating people of all classes, insinuating himself into their affections, and winning their confidence, he had acquired a readiness and a skill, peculiarly his own, and rarely ever seen in any other man. It was this principle of the man that accounts for many of his acts. Wherever there was a man of mark within convenient distance of him, he was determined on, and always succeeded in, making a friend of him. He disregarded the conservative policy of his synod, attended all sorts of meetings, and fraternized with different Christian people. He paid not the least attention to the so-called "Akron Rule" of the General Council, that Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran pastors only and that Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only. He invited Christians of all denominations to his communions, and exchanged pulpits with preachers of various creeds. And himself found access to pulpits to which no Lutheran pastor of his synodical connection had ever been admitted. Whilst by means of this peculiarity he made many friends, he also made a few enemies. Some of his ministerial brethren accused him that he was making conscious efforts to win for himself, and alienate from them the esteem and confidence of their own people, of which, however, he was doubtlessly innocent.



Rev. Stirewalt was a rather prolific writer, but confined his literary efforts to minor productions. Some of these owed their origin to local conditions and events. Germantown is situated between the cities of Dayton and Cincinnati, in both of which, especially the latter, exists a great deal of infidelity, and of laxity in matters of religious faith and practice. As is always the case with smaller towns in the vicinity of large cities, Germantown is affected by these same elements of its populous neighbors. Rev. Stirewalt, being very fond of attending all sorts of meetings and conventions, and determined never to lose the opportunity of making a speech, necessarily often came in contact with men of the "baser sort." As they delight in nothing so much as putting "knotty questions" to preachers, he soon became involved in disputes and discussions with them. These attacks made on him became the stimulating cause of the publication of several excellent tracts. There are some three or four of these extant treating of different subjects, and strongly controversial. Like his newspaper articles, they show him a facile and pleasing writer. The ideas and facts which they set forth are systematically arranged, and are expressed in chaste language. The productions of his pen are many, and range over a large scope of subjects, sermons, addresses, biographies, essays on theological subjects, poetry and fiction. If they were all collected, they would





make up several volumes, and would commend themselves to all intelligent readers.

Rev. Stirewalt excelled especially as a pastor. He was possessed of fine social qualifications, and had in an eminent degree acquired the art of pleasing. To say, that he was welcome to the homes and hearths of all his parishioners, is not telling half the truth. His people were delighted with his visits. Their affection and admiration for him rose to enthusiasm. The feeble condition of his health requiring constant light exercise, he spent the greater part of his time in pastoral visiting and personal communication with his parishioners. He would pass from house to house, conversing on the subject of religion and the interests of the church, and often relating anecdotes and pleasing incidents by the hour. The communicant membership in the town, exclusive of those in the country, is about two hundred. On all of these it seems he called every few weeks, and on some of them every week. By some it may be thought that he carried this matter to extremes. But let it be remembered that this was a necessity to him. Disease had for many years been preying upon his vitals. Had he confined himself closer to home and study, he would have much sooner fallen its victim. The buoyancy of mind and cheerfulness of spirit which he cultivated and maintained by his social habits, prolonged his life by many years. If any harm has been done by his course in this particular matter, the writer probably, as his successor, is its



greatest sufferer. His people demand an amount of pastoral visiting, pleading the precedent of Rev. Stirewalt, which, if complied with, will preclude all study, self-improvement, and preparation for the pulpit.

When we consider the feeble condition of this brother's health, we are amazed at the amount of labor which he performed. For twelve years he was afflicted with a distressing cough, the paroxysms occasionally becoming so violent that it seemed as if they would result in instant death. He was, moreover, subject to frequent hemorrhages, sick headache, dyspepsia, and other ailments. And yet he performed an amount of work that would have taxed the strength and endurance of a man of the soundest health and the most robust constitution. Nor did his suffering affect in the least degree his light and joyous spirits. In the midst of greatest suffering, his good humor bubbled over; and even when on the verge of the grave and expected every day to die, he would make the friends, who came to take a last look at him, laugh until the tears would run out of their eyes. He exhibited not the least fear of death. The grave had no terror to him.

Says one of his most intimate friends: "Amidst all his afflictions, his faith, zeal, and cheerfulness, did not forsake him. His was a living faith, and his love was active; hence he found his soul's delight, his highest joy, in laboring for Christ and his church. In season and out of season, in joy and in sorrow, in



health and in sickness, he lived and toiled for one great end—the glory of God and the welfare of man. Such a life of faith and self-denial could have but one ending. His was peace, and glorified the Lord in whom he trusted. He calmly, yet longingly awaited the summons from on high. All doubts were removed, and all clouds dispelled. He could say with the apostle: ‘I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.’”

Another says of him: “His faith ripened into assurance and holy love. He embraced every opportunity to preach Christ. He suffered intensely for many months, but was never impatient. He had a word of exhortation or encouragement for every one who visited him during his sickness.”

He lingered long on the verge of the grave. For many months it seemed as if he could not live from one day to another, but still death delayed his coming. At last, however, the hour of his release from the bonds and toils of earth arrived and terminated his labors and sufferings.

“His end,” says one, “was a grand and glorious triumph. He set his house in order, and bade his devoted wife and afflicted mother an affectionate adieu, and, admonishing once more those around him, he composed himself to rest, and giving his spirit into the hands of God, he was at home.”

“He admonished,” says another, “those who stood around him to be faithful, to revere and obey



the word of God, and then calmly and sweetly passed away into that rest for which he so ardently longed."

As the tidings of his departure spread, there was great sorrow and gloom, not only among his parishioners, but wherever his name was known, and throughout the church, of which he had been an honored and useful minister. The congregation to whom he had ministered thought his loss irreparable, and wept as those who had been bereft of their best earthly friend.

Rev. Stirewalt's death occurred on the 16th of June, 1872, at the age of 40 years, 2 months, and 4 days. His funeral services took place in the Lutheran Church on June 18th. A vast concourse of people assembled to pay him the last respect of earth. So great was their number, that many of them could not find standing room. At the house the services were conducted by Rev. A. S. Bartholomew, of Lima. In the church Rev. S. L. Harkey, of Dayton, delivered an appropriate discourse in German, and Rev. G. W. Busby, of Lewisburg, followed in an English discourse. Rev. J. H. Hunton, of East Germantown, Indiana, closed by a brief address, and Rev. W. A. Bowman, of Alexanderville, conducted the services at the grave. The benediction was then pronounced, and the large assembly slowly and with sad hearts dispersed.

After the death of Pastor Stirewalt the congregation remained vacant about one year, but having occasional preaching by neighboring pastors. In the





fall of 1872 the church council cast about for another minister. Their attention was directed to the writer, and they entered into correspondence with him with a view of securing his services. He visited the congregation in the fall of this year, and they gave him a call. This call he accepted, and he took charge of the congregation in April, 1873.

### *Rev. J. P. Hentz*

Was born May 5, 1832, in the village of Beuern, which is about six miles distant from the city of Glessen, in Hesse Darmstadt. He came to the United States in 1852, entered Pennsylvania College in 1856, graduated in 1861, and entered the theological seminary of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in the fall of the same year, was licensed to preach by the Allegheny Evangelical Lutheran Synod in 1862, was married to Cecilia A. Nicodemus, of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1863, preached, and served congregations successively in Indiana, West Newton, and Somerset, all in Pennsylvania, and in Adamsville, Ohio. From the latter place he removed to Germantown, where he still resides.

### *The Sunday School.*

This was organized in the year 1828, mainly through the exertions and by the agency of Mrs. Melasina Ayers and Mrs. Elizabeth Rohrer. They



constituted themselves a committee and called a meeting, at which officers were elected, and the school called into existence. As it was for awhile the only Sunday-school in the town, it combined all the religious elements of the community, and had no very distinct denominational character. After the school was organized Mrs. Ayers and Mrs. Rohrer went to work to secure the necessary books. They called on the public for contributions toward this object, but met with small success. The people at that time knew but little of Sunday-schools, of their character and their aim. They feared that this new movement might prove some innovation in the church, by which to pervert its faith and usages, and to turn the minds and hearts of the children from their fathers. Hence it was, that they looked upon this effort with suspicion, and treated it with coolness. Their mistrust received some confirmation from the fact that the first superintendent, whose name was John Pearson, was a very zealous Methodist. The school did not flourish. It did not lack scholars and teachers, but it wanted the support and encouragement of the community at large. Its life was short. After an existence of about two years, it was discontinued. This occurred in the year 1830. From this time until the year 1844 no Lutheran Sunday-school existed, but in the latter year it was revived and reorganized by an agent of the American Sunday School Union. The school then organized has continued uninterruptedly up to the present time.



But, although conducted in the Lutheran Church, and nominally Lutheran, it had for many years very little about it to make it Lutheran. What system of doctrines was taught in it, no one seems at present to be able to tell. Doubtlessly all sorts of doctrines were taught by all sorts of people, orthodoxy by one and heterodoxy by another. For this is the manner of teaching in all so-called union or undenominational Sunday-schools, and even in some of those who claim to be denominational. The superintendents in this school, up to the year 1865, when Rev. Stirewalt became pastor of the congregation, were mostly men who did not belong to the congregation—but few of them were Lutherans. Pastor Henkel never gave the school any attention, partly because he did not find time to do so, and partly because he knew the school did not want him. That with this state of things this school must have been a very inefficient institution, is but a natural and necessary inference. In 1865 Mr. Peter Dechant was elected superintendent who was a member of the church, and a very energetic and efficient man. Peter Dechant was succeeded in the superintendency by David Eminger. From that time on began a process of change, which has continued to the present. The school is now exclusively Lutheran. The teachers are, with very few exceptions, confirmed members of the congregation. General Councils' publications are in use in teaching, and nothing is allowed to be taught which does not accord with Lutheran doctrine or usage.



The founders of this school, Mrs. Ayers and Mrs. Rohrer, are both still living, and still among its most faithful and earnest workers. For more than fifty years they have taught in it, and exerted themselves for its upbuilding and welfare, have clung to it through all its vicissitudes, in its adversity and prosperity. Both are approaching fast on four score years, but they are rarely absent on Sunday, or from the teacher's meeting on Wednesday night. Scores of young men have gone forth from their classes to enter the church and to become useful members of society. And many, we doubt not, in the day of judgment will rise up and call them blessed. May their noble example find many imitators from the ranks of the younger men and women, both of the present and future generations. Leonard Dechant is at present superintendent, and has been during the past eight or nine years. The number of scholars and teachers varies from 200 to 250. The papers read by the school are the *Busy Bee* and the *Sunday School Herald*, the former a General Council, the latter a General Synod publication. They take the place of a Sunday-school library, and are much to be preferred to the trashy tales, of which Sunday-school libraries are, in a large part, made up.

### *A Few Noteworthy Facts*

Demand mention yet. The congregation has never lost a minister by dismissal or removal. From 1815 to 1872 it has enjoyed the ministrations of three





pastors, all of whom have died here. It has never wavered in its loyalty to Lutheran doctrine and Lutheran usage. Though surrounded by people of all sorts of creeds, and during the new-measure excitement fiercely assailed, and even invaded by pseudo-Lutheran pastors, who made every effort to turn its members from the truth, it yielded to no adverse influence, but remained firm in its adherence to Christian faith and practice as laid down and confessed in the standards of its denomination. The practice of instructing the young previous to confirmation it has never suffered to fall into decay or neglect. It has ever frowned down upon contention and strife, and as a consequence peace and harmony have almost uninterruptedly prevailed in its midst. The introduction of the English language in its public worship caused no serious disturbance, as it did in many other congregations. Three of its early supplies, Simon, Mau, and Paul Henkel, and two of its pastors, Dill and Andrew Henkel, were among the founders of the first synod in Ohio. The Joint Synod, and its districts, have frequently met in its midst, and have always been most kindly and most hospitably entertained. From 1809 to 1826 it worshiped in the German language exclusively. Since the latter year its German and English-speaking members have enjoyed equal rights and equal privileges. At present about four fifths of the members prefer the English language in public worship, and about one fifth still adhere to the German. Not many years



hence no more German will be required. At the time of its organization it was in union with the synod of Pennsylvania. In 1818 it became a part of the Ohio Synod. It remained in connection with the same when that body was divided into districts, and assumed the name of Joint Synod of Ohio. At first it held to the Western District, but when the English District came into being, it attached itself to that, and when the latter, in 1867, entered the General Council, it became a part of that general body, and thus it has remained up to this time.

In the month of July, 1867, was laid the corner stone of the present house of worship. Besides Pastors Henkel and Stirewalt there were present on the occasion Rev. Daniel Worley, of Canton, Ohio, and Rev. Solomon Denius, of the Reformed Church. By December 15th of this year the new building was so far completed as to enable the congregation to worship in the basement room. The church was dedicated on May 15th, 1870. Rev. W. H. Roth preached the dedication sermon, and Revs. C. Albrecht and W. A. Bowman assisted in the services. The dimensions of this church are 44 by 70 feet. It has a basement room for Sunday-school and lecture purposes. Its tower is 140 feet high. The latter was not completed until 1880. Recently the audience room has been refurnished, and is now in very good condition. The congregation is entirely free from debt, and has at present a communicant membership of about 400.



This congregation, by means of its steadfast adherence to the truth of God's Word, and by its general conservative character, never suffering itself to be carried away by the ephemeral and unscriptural reform movements that have from time to time, like soap bubbles, risen upon the surface of society, has proven itself a great blessing to the community in which it exists. It has exerted a sedative influence on feverish religious excitements, has stemmed the current of infidelity, has often calmed the storms that threatened to carry with them disaster, and has been a preservative and health-begetting leaven to the entire Christian public of its locality. For all this it has often been soundly berated, been charged with being old foggyish, formal, and destitute of experimental piety, etc., etc., but the time will come when its usefulness will be acknowledged. It has subserved a noble mission in the past, and has a great work before it in the future. No greater calamity could befall the cause of religion in Germantown than the extinction of this congregation. But of this there need be no fear. She has God's truth ; and where his truth is, there is his presence ; and where his presence is, there is safety and life.

### *The Pioneer Fathers and Founders of the Congregation.*

This history would be incomplete without a particular account of the fathers and founders of the



congregation. We will therefore return once more to the period of its organization, and give life sketches of those who are known to have been instrumental in calling the congregation into being, who laid its foundation, gave it their prayers, and devoted to it their time, talents, and means, during the infancy of its existence.

### *The Emericks.*

There were four brothers of them, Michael, William, John and Christopher; and George, who was a near relation of these four.

Michael, the oldest, born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, February 10, 1756, came here in 1806, and purchased the land on which at present stands Conover's Mill, on which he lived until removed by death, which event took place October 14, 1820. He was a man of means, and purchased at once land for those of his children who were grown up to years of maturity. Himself a strict and consistent member of the Lutheran Church, he brought up all his children in his own faith. Two of these, Mrs. John Stump and Mrs. John Stoevers are still living—the others have gone to their final rest. He frequently held official position in the congregation, and contributed largely to its support.

William, the next in age, born July 1, 1761, in Berks County, Pennsylvania, immigrated hither in 1804. He bought land to the west of Germantown,





of James Porter. The site of his dwelling is at present occupied by the residence of Christian Dechant. Here he lived all his days. He died February 10, 1842. He was a very zealous supporter of the church, and a warm and lifelong friend of Pastor Andrew Henkel. He reared a numerous and very respectable family, and some of his descendants are still among the most active of the members of the church in Germantown.

John was the third in age of these brothers, but as his grave is unmarked, the writer has not been able to ascertain either the date of his birth or of his death. (John Emerick is said to have been born August 24, 1762, and died September 2, 1845.) He survived the rest of his family, was never married, and always lived in Christopher's family. He had all the eccentricities usually ascribed to bachelors, jovial, fond of company, and the friend to everybody. He helped to build the first Lutheran Church, and was an active and lifelong member of the congregation.

Christopher, born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, January 23, 1771, was the youngest of the four. Among his acquaintances he passed by the name of Stoffel Emerick, and as such he is spoken of yet. He came here in 1804, in company with his brothers William and John. He entered government land on Shawnee Creek, adjoining the village of Sunsbury, on which he lived to the hour of his death, which event occurred January 26, 1837. Of his children



but three survive, William, Mrs. Christian Rohrer, and Mrs. Christian Eshelman.

Stoffel and John were good musicians, and performed on a number of instruments. They brought with them the first pipe organ ever seen in the Twin Valley, and manufactured a number of similar ones, some of which are still in good repairs, and sacredly preserved as heirlooms in the family. On account of these accomplishments, and their clever social qualities, their residence became a place of resort and diversion to our pioneer fathers. Here they often met in social intercourse, conferred with one another, and discussed matters of family, church, and state.

Christopher often held office in the congregation, and remained an earnest supporter of it as long as he lived, and brought up his children in his own faith. He was also frequently called to hold civil trusts, such as county and township commissioner.

George Emerick lived on the farm adjoining Germantown on the north. He was born in Daughin County, Pennsylvania, October 17, 1789. In what year he came to the Twin Valley is not known, but from some facts known it appears that it must have been before the year 1810. He was a prominent member of the Lutheran Church, and particularly warmly attached to Rev. Henkel. He was married twice, and reared a large family. His children are, with one or two exceptions, members of the church of their father, some of them zealous in its cause.



His mother, who came with him to this place, and died here in her ninetieth year, had in her infancy been carried away by the Indians. They attempted to drown her, but an elder sister interfered and rescued her from a watery grave. She remained a captive for some years, and had a heart-rending story to tell of her sufferings during her captivity. Mr. George Emerick died April 12, 1859.

The Emericks are a very numerous connection. Those in German township, and probably all in Montgomery county, are descended from the five gentlemen above spoken of.

### *John George Kern.*

Mr. Kern was a native of Berks County, Pennsylvania, and came to Ohio in 1804. He resided for two years in Cincinnati, and arrived in the Twin Valley in 1806. He was a millwright by trade, but turned his attention to farming after his arrival here. He entered a quarter section of land, about a mile south of Germantown, where from this time he lived to the hour of his death. He aided in the organization of the church at Germantown, and ever after continued a faithful member of it. He was a man of quiet habits of life, honest and faithful in his calling. His son William is the owner and occupant of his father's homestead. He was born February 8, 1775, and died in January, 1857.



*George and Peter Kiester.*

These two were brothers, both members of the church in Germantown, and were natives of Berks County, Pennsylvania. George came here in 1804, and Peter some years later. The first finally moved to Darke county, whilst the latter remained. Of him the Kiesters of German township are descended. He had been a revolutionary soldier, had been taken a prisoner, and had endured great sufferings. He was a very inoffensive and hard-working man, honest in word and in dealing.

*Jacob Bauer.*

This gentleman, whilst living here, was looked upon as the first man in the church. He came from Center County, Pennsylvania. His wife was the daughter of Rev. George Ilgen, a Lutheran minister, who served congregations in and about Aaronsburg, Pennsylvania. Mr. Bauer, after some years of residence here, moved away, since which time his name has entirely disappeared from this locality.

*Conrad Eisele.*

Eisele was a native German, came here in 1798, was a Lutheran, lived where now lives Mr. D.





Rohrer, resided here many years, but finally left this country, since which time his name no longer exists. He aided in the organization of the congregation.

### *John George Boyer.*

Mr. Boyer was a native of Berks County, Pennsylvania, but had for some years previous to his removal to Ohio resided in Center County, Pennsylvania. He came to the Twin Valley in 1805. He lived east of town, on Little Twin Creek. His descendants are not very numerous. They adhere generally to the Lutheran Church. He died March 2, 1855, at the age of 75 years, 1 month, and 9 days. His remains and those of his wife lie buried in front of the Lutheran Church, a substantial marble monument marking their resting place.

### *Henry Christ.*

Born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, this gentleman immigrated to our country in 1805, was a farmer and a skillful worker in iron, lived where his descendants still reside, was a faithful member of the Lutheran Church, and bore a good character. Date of birth and death unknown.

### *The Stumps.*

The Stumps are a prominent family in the Lutheran Church of this place. The founders of the family



were three in number, all brothers, Leonard, George, and Michael. They were all natives of Berks County, Pennsylvania.

George and Michael came here in 1810. They were members of the Lutheran Church, but beyond this fact nothing is known of them to the writer.

Leonard arrived in the Twin Valley in 1805, and was then a man of family. He bought the land adjoining Germantown on the west. His two sons, George and John, became later active and prominent members in the church. George married a daughter of the Rev. Dill, and followed farming. John became a prominent business man, engaged in mercantile pursuits and in banking operations, and died in a high old age. Leonard Stump was born January 1, 1767, and died July 29, 1811.

### *The Stoevers.*

This family claim to be lineal descendants of the Rev. John Casper Stoever, a pioneer Lutheran minister, who came to this country from Germany in the year 1728, and labored mainly in Lancaster and Lebanon counties, Pennsylvania. The patriarch of this family in our township was John Caspar Stoever, said to have been a grandson of the reverend of the same name. He was born in Swatara township, then in Daughn, but now in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania. He came to the Twin Valley in 1806, and was then already an old man. There came with him



his three sons, Frederick, Casper, and John, who were all of them heads of families. They all settled near Germantown, and all of them took an active part in the organization of the Lutheran congregation. John especially, called by his associates Hannas Stoevers, acted for many years a leading part in all its affairs. The dates of birth and death of any of them are unknown to the writer. The Stoevers are many, but not a single one of them is known to the writer, who is not either a communicant or a nominal member of the Lutheran Church. They are a family who will be neither coaxed nor driven from the church of their fathers.

### *The Lindamuths.*

There is a numerous connection of this name, all descended of these two, Jonathan and Thomas Lindamuth. Jonathan came to the Twin Valley in 1806, in company with his father-in-law, Michael Emerick. He secured land one mile west of Germantown, on which he lived and died. He reared a large family, consisting of nine sons and two daughters. Two of the former moved to Darke County, Ohio; the rest all settled about Germantown. He was one of the founders of the Lutheran congregation at this place, to which most of his descendants still adhere.

Thomas arrived much later, in 1824. Lived on Big Twin Creek several miles to the northwest of



Germantown. Was an excellent man, and an exemplary member of the Lutheran Church.

### *George Coleman.*

This gentleman, it seems, was here on a visit in 1806, entered land, and returned to Pennsylvania. In 1809 he brought his family out and settled on the land previously entered, situated about one mile to the northeast of Germantown. He had seven children, all of whom are still living. They are one of the best families in this valley, and adhere faithfully to the church of their fathers. Mr. Coleman, before coming to Ohio, was a resident either of Somerset or Bedford County, Pennsylvania.

### *The Kimmerlings.*

Frederick Kimmerling, sr., resided, previous to his removal to Ohio, near Tanytown, Frederick County, Maryland. He came to German township in 1808 with his family, consisting of his wife and four children, bought, and lived on land, adjoining Mr. Coleman's farm on the west. His son Frederick inherited his place, and lived on it until the few last years of his life. Both father and son were honored members of the Lutheran Church. The latter, after a life adorned by every Christian virtue, died in peace; February 15, 1880, at the age of 76 years.

Among those who came here at a later period, and





in their time acted a prominent part in the affairs of the congregation, may be mentioned Charles O. Wolpers, Jacob Eminger, George Rowe, the Schwartz family, Dr. M. Trout. The present church council consists of the following :

*Elders.*—Leonard Dechant, Henry Moses, George Eckhart, Daniel Shaeffer.

*Deacons.*—Adam McCallay, John P. Shuey, Tobias Kuhnle, Charles Bohme.

*Trustees.*—Dr. M. Trout, Lewis Huber, D. Schriver, David Eminger, William R. Kern.

*Secretary.*—Charles Eminger.

*Treasurer.*—H. Wolpers.

We will conclude this history by giving a condensed account of the adventures and life of a most remarkable female, who, during the latter part of her life, became identified with the Lutheran congregation in Germantown.

### *Mrs. Catharine Schaeffer.*

This lady has a most romantic history. Her maiden name was Lorisck. Her father's given name is no longer known. Her parents were farmers, and lived in Berks County, Pennsylvania. When she was a child about seven years old, somewhere between the years 1750 and 1760, it happened one day, when the whole family were in the harvest field, that they were surprised by hostile Indians. The mother, offering resistance, was instantly killed, and the



others were made captives. There were three of them—Catharine, her father, and an infant sister. They were immediately started westward. Their way lay over high mountains and took them through dense forests and across wide and deep streams. For three days they had nothing to eat, and nearly perished from fatigue and starvation. The infant cried incessantly, which annoyed the Indians, and they determined to make an end of it. They took the child and threw it into a stream, to drown it, but Catharine pleaded for its life. An old squaw interfered in her behalf, and she was permitted to rescue her sister from a watery grave. Just then a female deer, which had just been killed, was brought into the camp. It had had young, and being still warm, Catharine milked it, and with the milk nursed her little sister. After that they were supplied with food, and Catharine devoted herself particularly to taking care of this child. This infant became later the mother of Mr. George Emerick, already spoken of, moved from Pennsylvania to Germantown, Ohio, died here, and lies buried in the Lutheran graveyard.

The Indians, who held Catharine captive, continually shifted their place of encampment, and wandered over vast areas of forest. How far, or where they went, she was afterward unable to tell. But, when late in life, she moved to Ohio, she recognized some of the localities where she had been during her captivity. Among others, she claimed to have been in the Twin Valley, on the very spot,



which is now occupied by our town. Catharine's father and sister were, after some time, given up, and returned to their former home; but with Catharine the Indians were unwilling to part, and for seven long years she remained in captivity. Being a rather handsome maiden, of regular features, dark and brilliant eyes, fair complexion, and long auburn hair, all of which her captors admired, they were anxious to retain her, and watched and guarded her with jealous eye.

The years of her captivity were to her years of sadness and sorrow. She witnessed scenes that she was never able to erase from her mind, and the thought of which would always cause her to shudder. The Indians often brought white captives into their camp, whom they would slowly torture to death, amidst the intensest sufferings. They would first strip their victims to the skin, then they would make incisions into the flesh all over their bodies, and into these they would thrust sharp-pointed ragged-edged sticks, until they would bristle all over with them. Then they would set fire to these sticks, and slowly roast their helpless victims, until after hours of most excruciating agony death would kindly come to their relief. The children of white parents who had offended them, they would suspend by the arms, and hold them over a fire until life became extinct. Such scenes of horror would cause Catharine nearly to die with terror. But great as were her sorrows, she bore them all with remarkable patience. She had learned



enough of the Christian religion from her parents, to prove to her a source of consolation and hope. Her parents were members of the Lutheran Church and had taught her to pray, and she prayed every day of her captivity to her Savior for protection, and for her restoration to her friends and her home.

She was assigned as servant to an old chief, who was no longer able to engage in the chase, or to accompany his tribe in their various excursions. She prepared and set before him his food, and ministered to his general comfort, as a child would to a parent. She soon learned to speak the Indian language with fluency, which she never again forgot. The Indians at last ceased to mistrust or to watch her. She was often left quite alone with the aged chief, and suffered to go into the woods to gather herbs and roots and firewood. Prompted by curiosity she would frequently wander off great distances. It thus happened that one day, having gone away a greater distance than usual, she came to a river bank, where she saw white men engaged in building a large river boat, perhaps a ferry boat. She entered into conversation with them, and they discovered that she was a white captive. She went there again, and the white men learned other particulars of her former history and present situation. As after this they saw nothing more of her, they determined to enter the Indian village in which she lived, during the absence of the men, and steal her. Their plan succeeded. When the old chief heard and saw what was being done,





he called Catharine to him and bade her affectionately good-by, made her many presents of trinkets such as Indians prepare with their own hands, and wept like a child, an exhibition of sorrow quite unusual to an Indian. The trinkets Mrs. Schaeffer kept to the end of her life, and always esteemed them as very precious mementos.

The locality where this took place is not accurately known at present. By some it is supposed to have been in the vicinity of Wheeling, West Virginia. But this is mere conjecture. It is more likely that it was in North-eastern Ohio, along the shores of Lake Erie; inasmuch as at that time various Indian tribes had here permanently established themselves, and lived more securely than they did in the southern and south-eastern part of what now constitutes the State of Ohio.

After her liberation Catharine lived in the family of one of her liberators. This man would have liked to adopt her as his own daughter, but she anxiously longed for home and parent. She at last discovered the locality of her childhood's home, and was soon thereafter restored to her father. There must have been great joy when, after so many years of separation, and after so many dangers and trials, father and daughter met once more. The father had believed his daughter lost to him forever, and as Jacob of old often wept over his son Joseph, so he had often wept for his captive child. And she, as the long years of her captivity passed by, had begun to



give up all hope of ever again meeting her kindred. The greater was now their gladness, and all past sorrow was forgotten in their present transport of joy.

She married Peter Schaeffer and became the mother of eight children, five sons and three daughters. Her husband died in Berks County, Pennsylvania. After this she lived with her daughter, Mrs. George Boyer. When the Boyers moved from Berks to Center County, she accompanied them, and when from there again they immigrated to Ohio, she went with them to the same state. She came to the Twin Valley in 1805, and remained here until removed by death, which took place August 16, 1818, in the seventy-third year of her life. 73

Mrs. Schaeffer was a member of the Lutheran Church and a devoutly pious Christian lady. During the dozen of years that she lived in Germantown, by her kindness in word and in deed, she endeared herself to all with whom she came in contact. During her captivity among the Indians she had acquired some knowledge of the medicinal properties and uses of roots and herbs. As physicians in her day were not very numerous, she was often applied to for advice and assistance in cases of sickness. It thus happened that by degrees she got into quite an extensive medical practice. She was especially skillful in midwifery, and those who knew her had the utmost confidence in her as a reliable physician. She thoroughly understood the Indian character, and always retained a dread of the red



man. She declared the Indians to be a treacherous, vindictive, and cruel people, with very few redeeming qualities about them. During the first few years of her residence in Ohio, the Indians were still numerous in this state. They soon learned who she was, and after that she was frequently favored by their visits. They would hang around her for days, encamp in the woods near by her residence, and visit her day after day. She conversed with them in their own tongue, and treated them kindly, not so much from a feeling of kindness for them, as from fear of them. And there was real danger for her. They claimed her as one of their own race, and had they thought it safe to do so, they would have carried her off, old as she was. Knowing this, she would always rather hide from them than meet them.

The number of descendants of this lady are at this time to be counted by the thousand. All her eight children settled in and about Germantown. They all reared large families. These and their descendants have intermarried with other families in the community, until almost every family is in some way related to her. For this reason, as also on account of her strange experiences of life, and her own peculiar characteristics, she is deserving of the extended notice hereby given her. Her remains lie buried in front of the Lutheran Church, and it is to be hoped that some day an enduring monument will be erected over them, so as more effectively to perpetuate her memory.









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